"MELVIN & HOWARD"

by

BO GOLDMAN

FIRST DRAFT

MELVIN AND HOWARD

FADE IN

TITLES

1 WATERHOLE - STONEWALL PASS, NEVADA - LATE DAY 1 (X)

The desert between Las Vegas and Tonopah, nothing but sage and greasewood. Sound -- in the distance, a motor. It comes closer then fades, comes closer, fades.

Pan off the waterhole in the direction of the sound. It approaches again, a figure appears in the distance.

2 ON THE MOTORCYCLE 2

Only the rider's back, silver-streaked hair. This gaunt figure circles lazily in the moonlight, motorcycle tires rumbling over the alkali. The circles get bigger and now bigger, and as he comes around this time, the moonlight catches his face, aristocratic cheekbones, a stringy beard, a pilot's light windbreaker. This is Howard, age 62, looks over 70.

3 ANOTHER ANGLE - HOWARD 3

sweeping under the moon, wider and wider and now he speeds towards the waterhole, giving the Harley full throttle.

4 ON THE WATERHOLE 4

A knoll running up to the edge of it.

5 ON HOWARD 5

heading straight for the knoll, the chopper kicking up sage and greasewood and alkali behind it. Tremendous speed -- it hits the knoll.

6 ON THE MOTORCYCLE 6

Howard flying through the air, his knees clutched around the machine, his eyes wide with joy, laughter ringing through the desert.

CONTINUED

6 CONTINUED 6

The motorcycle clears the waterhole on the leap, Howard snug in the saddle, lands in the mud on the other side, skids, churns, the tires spitting mud, now he rolls out on the desert again.

7 ANOTHER ANGLE - HOWARD 7

sweeping into a figure eight, testing his motor now, picking up speed once more, heading straight for the knoll.

8 ON THE KNOLL 8

The motorcycle invisible, only the sound blasting through the night, louder, louder, and now the motorcycle hits the top of the knoll. A rock, a stone, something, it kicks, it stutters, it flies short.

9 ON HOWARD 9

His face exactly the same as before, exultation at the leap, but there is no motorcycle under him now, only air.

10 ANOTHER ANGLE - HOWARD 10

His momentum carrying him over the water and he lands with a crunch on the other side, his head hits the mud, a flare of blood spurts from his ear.

11 HOWARD'S POINT OF VIEW 11

His eye catching sight of his motorcycle fluttering down, landing with a splash, bubbling as it disappears into the waterhole.

TITLES OUT

12 EXT. DESERT - DUSK - ON HOWARD 12 (X)

picking himself up, stumbling across the desert, nothing but silence around him, his feet kicking over the alkali. He trips, rights himself, moves on. (X)

13 ANOTHER ANGLE - HOWARD 13

faltering, falling.

CONTINUED

13 CONTINUED 13

He picks himself up, his face scratched, his lips crusted with saliva, blood caked around his ear.

14 HOWARD'S POINT OF VIEW 14

Way in the distance, the headlights of a car.

15 ON HOWARD 15

He starts to raise his hand, almost furtively, but then he draws it back. He does not want to wave.

He looks towards the moon, spins once like a shot-putter. Now he falls.

The headlights pass on down the Interstate. Darkness.

16 EXT. NEVADA HIGHWAY - NIGHT - LONG SHOT 16 (X)

Two headlights, one dimmer and more yellow than the other, are coming down the Interstate now. Sound -- a man singing. (X) The song is horrible, the voice joyous.

MELVIN (v.o.)
(singing)
'Well, he called his elves together
To soup up his old sleigh
So Rudolph and the other reindeer
Could rest on Christmas Day....'

17 INT. CAR - NIGHT - ON MELVIN DUMMAR 17 (X)

a face with no secrets, a cowlick and sideburns, looking younger than his thirties. Montgomery Ward pants and a shirt with cowboy roses.

MELVIN
(singing)
'He's got a million miles to travel
And he'll do it in one day
Oh that's because old Santa Claus
Got a souped-up Santa sleigh.'

The song trails off into a hum as Melvin pulls off onto the side of the road.

18 ON MELVIN 18

undoing his fly. As he reaches into his pants, the sound of a car in the distance, he quickly turns to hide himself, the car passes.

Now he reaches in again, but another car catches him in its lights.

MELVIN
Jeesuz.

He climbs back into his car, stomps on the gas, and he zooms off the highway and on to the alkali, up an old cattle road. Now he scuds to a stop, steps out onto the emptiness of the desert.

19 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN 19

pissing, sighing with relief, his sigh mingling with the crackling of his urine as it hits the desert crust.

20 ON MELVIN'S FACE 20

Pleasure. The same pleasure he feels at eating, sleeping, defecating, copulating.

Climbs back into his car. Starts up the motor, backs around, and the headlight catches a body lying in the deserted cattle road.

21 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN 21

blinks. Squints, now he throws the car into low gear, rolls slowly towards the body, stops a few feet away.

22 ON MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW 22

The body doesn't move. Limp, dead.

23 ON MELVIN 23

following the shaft of the headlight, moving towards the body. Poised a step away.

Now he crouches over it. A grunt. Melvin rolls it over. A beard, Howard's long hair. He lifts him, the headlight shines full into Howard's eyes, they open, flicker. Howard grunts again.

CONTINUED

23 CONTINUED 23

MELVIN
Whut?

Howard doesn't stir, doesn't answer. Melvin cradles Howard's head, and the ear comes into view, fresh blood trickling over the clotting. Melvin heaves Howard up, half-stumbling, half-carrying him towards the car, opens the passenger side and shovels him in.

24 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN 24

slamming the door shut. Now Melvin looks out towards the desert.

25 MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW 25

Only blackness and silence.

26 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN 26

climbs into the car on the driver's side, looks over at his passenger. Howard has scrunched himself into a corner, his eyes are wide open now, and wild with terror. Melvin catches it.

Melvin smiles, nothing from Howard. Melvin smiles again.

MELVIN
Whut's the matter, ol' buddy?

Howard doesn't answer. He turns his head a little but as he turns, blood oozes.

MELVIN
Whut are you doin' out here?

Silence again. Howard doesn't take his eyes off Melvin. Melvin leans toward him. Howard braces himself against the door.

MELVIN
(peering into
Howard's face)
That ear don't look too good to me.
You want a doctor?

Howard shakes his head.

CONTINUED

26 CONTINUED 26

MELVIN (Cont'd)
There's a doctor in Beatty. That ain't but a few miles. Want to go to Beatty?

Howard doesn't answer, just holds himself stiff against the door.

MELVIN
We'll go to Beatty. Okay?

He throws the car into gear, spins around and heads off towards the interstate.

27 INT. CAR - NIGHT 27 (X)

Melvin at the wheel, Howard hiding in the corner of the seat offering Melvin as narrow a view of his face as possible. Suddenly a clatter, Melvin's head whips around, Howard has been taken with the shakes, terrible heaves, his teeth chattering.

Howard doubles over trying to warm himself, clutching both shoulders cross-handed. Melvin reaches for the heater, clicks it on, nothing happens.

MELVIN
This ain't but a '66 -- damn heater never did work.

Howard shudders again, a terrible whistling through his teeth. Melvin bangs the heater with his fist.

HOWARD
It's okay.

MELVIN
What do you mean it's okay? Now you just hold on there.

Melvin pulls over to the side of the road.

28 ON MELVIN 28

climbing out, opening the trunk. The trunk light shows two giant plastic bags full of white powder, some horse harness, a bow and arrow, a fishing rod, stuffed animals and pull-toys, a ratty blanket and a pillow.

He fishes out the blanket and pillow.

29 TWO-SHOT - HOWARD AND MELVIN 29

Melvin leans towards Howard, drapes the blanket over him, but does not drape. It is about the size of a shirt and the pillow he places under his head would fit a doll.

Howard regards them.

MELVIN
They belong to my little girl. Can't go to sleep without her bumby.

Melvin laughs.

MELVIN
Shit.

Howard shivers, the tiny blanket falls off him. He doesn't have the strength to pick it up. Melvin bends over to retrieve it, as he does his head hits the dashboard and the heater whirrs on.

MELVIN
Well, damn! Damn!

29-A INT. CAR - NIGHT 29-A (X)

He laughs again. Nothing fron Howard, still underneath the baby blanket, but now allowing his head to ease back ever so slightly into the pillow.

Melvin reaches his hand under the heater.

MELVIN
Warm as toast! You brought me luck, ol' buddy. That heater ain't worked since my wife kicked it last time I undressed her in the car.

Howard stirs slightly, Melvin squints over at him. Melvin reaches across Howard, flips open the glove compartment -- a torrent of bills and kleenex, a flashlight, half-eaten candy bars, some knitting needles, a pair of scissors, old Dixie cups.

Melvin rummages around in the mess.

MELVIN
I was lookin' for a band-aid.

HOWARD
Keep your eye on the road.

CONTINUED

29-A CONTINUED 29-A

MELVIN
How's that?

HOWARD
I said keep your eye on the road.

MELVIN
Well, up yours, ol' timer.

HOWARD
What?

MELVIN
I said 'Up yours.'

Melvin rummages some more, more papers fall out, Howard half-tries to pick them up.

MELVIN
Leave 'em. They ain't but a bunch of collection notices.

He snaps the glove compartment shut, looks over at Howard's ear.

MELVIN
We ain't gonna get to Beatty any too soon.

HOWARD
No doctors.

MELVIN
There ain't no doctors there. Just a public health nurse.

HOWARD
No nurses.

MELVIN
You don't like nurses?

HOWARD
No, I don't.

MELVIN
Okay, okay.

They ride in silence.

Howard is heaving now, Melvin watches him closely.

CONTINUED

29-A CONTINUED - 2 29-A

HOWARD
I'm not going to Beatty.

MELVIN
Where are you going?

HOWARD
Where are you going?

MELVIN
Aw, Jeezus.

HOWARD
I'm sorry ---

MELVIN
Don't apologize ---

HOWARD
I never apologize but I'll try to explain ---

MELVIN
Don't explain!

HOWARD
You want to stop at Beatty, fine. I don't. I'm going to Vegas ---

(X)

Howard is silent. Melvin grits his teeth. Howard shrugs.

MELVIN
Man, you sure beat it, don't you? Squirrelly ol' wino layin' out there in the west 40, nobody sees you 'til kingdom come -- I pick you up and what do you do? Rag me.

HOWARD
I'm sorry.

MELVIN
What?

HOWARD
Nothing. I just think I'll rest a while.

MELVIN
You do that. You lay back now -- we're coming up to Beatty now -- you still don't want to stop?

CONTINUED

29-A CONTINUED - 3 29-A

HOWARD
No, no stops, please.

MELVIN
You'll be sorry, you're gonna miss the knockers on the public health nurse there.

Howard smiles.

HOWARD
Nice, huh? (X)

CONTINUED

29-A CONTINUED - 4 29-A

MELVIN
Do we stop at Beatty or no?

Howard sighs.

HOWARD
No.

Melvin stomps on the gas.

MELVIN
Vegas, here we come.

They drive for a long while in silence.

30 HOWARD 30

is silent, always watching Melvin, shifting, shaking some, Melvin loose at the wheel.

HOWARD
You're not a bad driver.

MELVIN
I been driving since I was seven years old.

HOWARD
How'd you reach the pedals?

MELVIN
Make it nine. I had most of my growth by nine.

HOWARD
I'll bet you did. Jacking off in that trailer.

MELVIN
How'd you know I lived in a trailer?

HOWARD
Didn't you say so?

MELVIN
They was my three brothers in the trailer with me.

HOWARD
In one trailer?

CONTINUED

30 CONTINUED 30

MELVIN
Two of us slept on cots and two on the old dinette table. We didn't have nothing but an outhouse. I remember the first day I went to school I peed in the water fountain.

HOWARD
Interesting.

MELVIN
Took me right down to the Salvation Army, bought me shoes and carted me back to school. (X)

(X)

HOWARD
What'd you say your name was?

MELVIN
Melvin Dummar.

HOWARD
You're kidding me, Melvin.

Melvin smiles, looks over at Howard.

MELVIN
Hey, ol' buddy. You want to do me a favor?

HOWARD
Depends on what it is.

MELVIN
I've written a song.

HOWARD
No ---

MELVIN
It's a Christmas number -- 'Santa's Souped-Up Sleigh.'

CONTINUED

30 CONTINUED - 2 30

HOWARD
Oh God.

MELVIN
I sent it to Hollywood Music. (X)
You know you give them the words
-- they write you the music --
seventy dollars and worth every
penny -- you want to hear it?

HOWARD
No.

MELVIN
Here's how it goes --
(sings)
'Well, he called his elves together
To soup up his old sleigh
So Rudolph and the other reindeer
Could rest on Christmas Day

'He's got a million miles to travel
And he'll do it in one day
Oh that's because old Santa Claus
Got a souped up Santa sleigh'

HOWARD
Enough, sir ---

MELVIN
Wait till you hear the talk part
-- a dramatic narration like Red
Sovine --
(speaks)
'Now listen there fat man
Just because you're Santa Claus
That don't give you the right
To come around and making all
that noise
In the middle of the night.
Now I don't care who you are,
fat man
You get those reindeer off my
roof ---'

HOWARD
Please stop ---

MELVIN
What's the matter?

CONTINUED

30 CONTINUED - 3 30

HOWARD
My ear.

MELVIN
Told you we should have stopped at Beatty.

HOWARD
It's the sound.

MELVIN
What do you mean, the sound?

HOWARD
Your song.

MELVIN
You're cruel, man, you know that? You're a cruel man.

HOWARD
I have an aversion to song.

MELVIN
You never sung in your life?

HOWARD
Not if I could help it.

MELVIN
That's how you got to be an ol' asshole. Now you come along on the chorus --
(sings)
'He's got a rocket burnin' mighty quick
Turnin' souped up Santa's sleigh
He'll come in like a streak of light
And he'll blast off right away...'
You got that?

HOWARD
I don't know.

MELVIN
Now sing along with me. Or you gonna walk to Vegas.
(sings)
'He's got a rocket burnin' mighty quick'

Motions to Howard to join in.

CONTINUED

30 CONTINUED - 4 30

HOWARD
(mumbling; gingerly singing)
'Turnin' souped up Santa s sleigh'

MELVIN
Now you're gettin' it! Once more ---

Howard starts to sing.

HOWARD
(singing)
'He's got a rocket burnin' mighty quick
Turnin' souped up Santa's sleigh....'

MELVIN
(speaking)
'Now now, Mr. Fat Man, what are you trying to do? Now that chimney's too small and you might fall -- so you just get down off that roof'

Melvin points to Howard and Howard joins in.

HOWARD AND MELVIN
(singing)
'When you hear those rockets roar
You'll know Santa's on his way
But he'll be back again next year
In his souped up Santa's sleigh!'

Howard seems pleased with himself.

MELVIN
You done it! And you want to know something?

HOWARD
What?

MELVIN
You weren't bad.

HOWARD
Come on.

MELVIN
Now you sing me one of your songs ---

HOWARD
I don't know any songs ---

30 CONTINUED - 5 30

MELVIN
Anythin'. 'Stop And Smell The Roses,' My Woman, My Woman, My Wife' -- whatever you like ---

HOWARD
I don't know any songs. My father was the singer in the family. 'When The Sunset Turns The Ocean's Blue To Gold,' 'Bill Bailey.'
(imitates)
'Sonny, you do the verse, I'll take the chorus.' And off he'd go.

MELVIN
What songs do you know?

HOWARD
Me? Nothing --
(shrugs)
'Bye Bye Blackbird.'

MELVIN
There you go!

Melvin punches Howard in the arm.

MELVIN
Lay it on me, ol' timer.

HOWARD
Don't be crazy.

MELVIN
'Ladeez and gentlemen -- to wind up our program tonight -- and I want y'all t'drive home safely -- y'hear? -- we got a brand new number by an ol' ol' timer -- he's been a pickin' and a strummin' for many a year -- so let's hear it for this little ditty -- the ol' timer and "Bye Bye Blackbird!" -- take it, ol' timer!!'

Howard looks at him.

HOWARD
Let me out.

Melvin winks.

CONTINUED

30 CONTINUED - 6 30

MELVIN
Come on.

Howard starts to hum a little.

MELVIN
Ooh, that's nice -- did I hear a word?

HOWARD
'Bye, Bye, Blackbird.'

MELVIN
There she goes.

HOWARD
(starting to sing faintly)
'Pack up all my cares and woes
Here I go
Singing low'

HOWARD AND MELVIN
(singing)
'Bye, bye, blackbird!'

Howard is gaining strength.

HOWARD
(singing)
'Where somebody waits for me
Sugar's sweet
So is she'

HOWARD AND MELVIN
(singing)
'Bye, bye, blackbird!'

Melvin turns to Howard, presenting him like an emcee.

HOWARD
(singing)
'No one here can love and understand me
Oh what hard luck stories they all hand me

Make my bed and light the light
I'll arrive
Late tonight
Blackbird ----'

MELVIN
(singing)
'Blackbird!'

30 CONTINUED - 7 30

HOWARD AND MELVIN
(singing together)
'Blackbird
Bye! Bye!'

Howard's face is aglow with joy, but no more so than Melvin's.

MELVIN
Hey!

Melvin reaches out his hand -- Howard gives it a boogie slap.

MELVIN
I like that song -- clean up that lyric a little and she'll take right off.

Suddenly Howard withdraws -- dim and distant. They ride again in silence.

Melvin looks over to him.

MELVIN
How're you doin?'

HOWARD
I'm fine.
(after a moment)
So where are you going now?

MELVIN
Home to Gabbs. Bringin' back some stuff for our trailer my sister wanted to get rid of. (X)

HOWARD
What do you do in Gabbs? (X)

MELVIN
I work in the Mag Ox Plant. You know -- Maalox -- you get an ulcer ---

HOWARD
I know, I know ---

MELVIN
You know what?

HOWARD
I know Maalox comes from magnesium oxide. All the Jews in New York drink it.

30 CONTINUED - 8 30

Melvin looks at him.

MELVIN
Well that's more than most people know.

HOWARD
Thank you.

MELVIN
I wasn't complimenting you. That was just a comment.

HOWARD
Still I appreciate it.

Silence.

MELVIN
Don't bother me, dirty work or no. Was a milkman once -- used to stink of sour milk. Now I smell like Maalox.

HOWARD
What a shame.

MELVIN
I remember once -- I was delivering milk in the middle of the night -- and it come to me -- why don't I get a job on graveyard like some of them old gals' husbands -- so I went around to McDonnell Douglas and Hughes ---

HOWARD
And what happened?

MELVIN
Nuthin.'

HOWARD
What a shame.

MELVIN
You keep saying 'what a shame' ---

HOWARD
I might have done something.

30 CONTINUED - 9 30

MELVIN
Done what?

HOWARD
I'm Howard Hughes.

Melvin's head swivels, he squints over at Howard beside him. Now he looks back at the road. Suddenly he turns back to Howard.

MELVIN
How's that?

HOWARD
I said I'm Howard Hughes.

Melvin stifles a smile, tries to look very serious, steals another look over at Howard, now he shakes his head to himself.

MELVIN
Well I believe in anybody callin' themselves anything they want to.

HOWARD
I appreciate that.

31 MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW 31

Windshield, a raindrop, then another. Then a sudden downpour, a desert shower, stopping almost as soon as it starts.

32 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW 32

The rain clearing, just a gray sky. He opens the window. Howard opens his window.

MELVIN
(breathing in)
Greasewood.

HOWARD
(breathing in)
Sage.

MELVIN
Nothing like the smell of the desert after the rain.

CONTINUED

32 CONTINUED 32

HOWARD
Greasewood and sage.

They roll along for a while.

33 HOWARD AND MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW - NIGHT 33 (X)

Way in the distance, the casinos and hotels rising out of the desert -- Las Vegas.

34 OMITTED 34

35 MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW - NIGHT 35 (X)

rolling into Las Vegas on the boulevard. The blaze of neon lighting up his and Howard's face.

MELVIN
Can I let you off at the Salvation Army?

HOWARD
No thanks. What are you going to do?

MELVIN
We'll keep pluggin'.

36 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN AND HOWARD 36

HOWARD
Let me off at The Sands.

Melvin drives down Las Vegas Blvd., and pulls in at The Sands.

HOWARD
Over there.

Melvin drives around the back, towards the bungalows, slowly, about 10MPH.

HOWARD
Stop ---

MELVIN
Right here?

HOWARD
This is the place.

CONTINUED

36 CONTINUED 36

Melvin stops, looks over at Howard.

MELVIN
You got a friend in the kitchen? Give you some money to get that ear attended to?

Howard doesn't answer, fiddling with the door handle.

HOWARD
How do you get out of this thing?

Melvin reaches across Howard, flips the door handle, the door opens.

MELVIN
Well I enjoyed it, ol' buddy.

He smiles at Howard, swings the door wide open, Howard hesitates.

Suddenly ---

HOWARD
You got any money?

Melvin sighs, reaches in his pocket, fumbles.

37 CLOSEUP- HOWARD 37

waiting, watching.

38 ON MELVIN 38

fishing in his pocket.

MELVIN
Ain't got but a quarter change ---

Howard doesn't answer, holds out his hand, Melvin drops the quarter into it.

Howard gets out now, shuts the door.

HOWARD
Thank you, Melvin.

And he is gone.

39 EXT. GABBS, NEVADA - BEFORE SUNRISE 39

The middle of nowhere. In the distance, dense, white chemical smoke curling up off the ridge where a magnesium plant hovers. Down below, almost a mile away, the town, rutted dirt streets lined with trailers.

40 OMITTED 40

41 ON MELVIN (X) 41

driving down a baked-clay side street, dirty dogs clearing out of the way. A battered Airstream trailer lies ahead on the right. Pulling into the yard, grassless and sandy, a plastic pool caked with mud. A pull toy straddling an old clothes wringer. A clothesline, a child's snowsuit pinned to it.

42 ON MELVIN 42

climbing out of the car, picking his way to the door of the trailer, past a new Honda leaning against the air drums.

43 INT. MELVIN'S TRAILER - DAWN 43 (X)

A dinette set fighting for space with a child's bicycle and toys. A new TV, a dishrag from the evening meal draped over it.

Melvin moves to a partition, a blanket strung on a piece of twine.

43-A MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW 43-A

Darcy, a nymphet 10 years old, sound asleep. He bends to kiss her, tucks the blanket around her. She smiles. Melvin adjusts the heater, then moves off, pulling the partition closed.

44 ON LYNDA 44

in her middle twenties, hunched sexy shoulders of an ex-cheerleader, busky and redolent with sleep now. Melvin peels off his clothes, they drop at his ankles as he climbs into bed.

ON MELVIN AND LYNDA

He touches her. And she stirs. Melvin is glazed with the heat of her sleep, the warmth of the bed, Lynda's proximity. He rustles, she tries to quiet him, but now he moves over her. Excited by her, and now she by him, their intimacy always contained, conscious of Darcy beyond the curtain.

45 LATER 45

Melvin falling asleep. Lynda awake beside him. The sound of a car pulling up. Lynda freezes. A car door opens, shuts.

Another car door opens, shuts.

ON LYNDA

She doesn't move, tuned into the sounds, familiar with them almost, dreading them. Now she gets up and goes to the window, looks out.

46 EXT. MELVIN'S YARD - EARLY MORNING - LYNDA'S POINT OF VIEW 46 (X)

A jump cable being connected to a battery in Melvin's car. A spark flies, the car starts. Repossession men in their Montgomery Ward suits, flip the cable off, throw it in the trunk of their car. One starts to close the trunk, the other stops him.

ON MELVIN'S MOTORCYCLE

One lifts the handlebars, the other the rear wheel, and they heave it into their trunk.

47 INT. TRAILER - EARLY MORNING - ON LYNDA 47 (X)

She starts for the door, then stops. She lifts the curtain of the other window.

48 EXT. MELVIN'S YARD - EARLY MORNING - LYNDA'S POINT OF VIEW 48 (X)

Melvin's car driving down the dusty street. Following it the repo car, the trunk lid catching the dawn light as it bobbles over the motorcycle.

49 CLOSEUP - LYNDA 49

turning back to Melvin. He sleeps soundly, oblivious, beatific.

Lynda reaches for the telephone.

50 ROAD TO GABBS - DAWN - A PICKUP 50

jaunting down the road. At the wheel in a straw cowman's hat, Clark Taylor. Stashed in a rack behind him, like a shotgun, his guitar. (X)

51 INT. MELVIN'S TRAILER - DAY - LYNDA 51 (X)

pressing a doll of Darcy's into a little wicker suitcase. Darcy dressed and scruffy, wiping the sleep from her eyes. They hear Clark's truck pull up. Lynda goes to the door, makes a motion for Clark to wait.

51-A EXT. MEL'S YARD - DAY - CLARK 51-A

reaching for his guitar, opening the case, starts to noodle as he waits.

52 ON LYNDA 52

frantically finishes throwing clothes into a bag as Melvin begins to stir. She half-pulls, half-pushes Darcy out the door. Darcy heads for the pickup.

Lynda reaches for her own bag, and she sees Melvin turn over. She rushes out the door, then stops. Goes back.

53 ON LYNDA AND MELVIN 53

For an instant, the feeling she might want to climb into bed with him. She reaches down, jostles him awake. Melvin looks up.

LYNDA
Good-bye, Melvin.

She leaves.

54 ON MELVIN 54

He blinks, sits up.

CONTINUED

54 CONTINUED 54

MELVIN

Hunh?

54-A MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW 54-A

The partition pulled, Darcy's bed empty.

55 ON MELVIN 55

He throws himself out of bed, dives out the door.

56 MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW - THE PICKUP TRUCK 56

already disappearing up the road, Darcy's face pressed to the rear window. She waves.

The old dog sitting where Melvin's car was. Melvin spins for his motorcycle. Nothing there but an oil rag in the dust.

57 CLOSEUP - MELVIN 57

blinking, bewildered. He looks down the road, the smoke ever curling up from the magnesium plant.

58 EXT. RENO, NEVADA - DAY - ESTABLISHING SHOT 58

59 EXT./INT. MOTEL ROOM - RENO - DAY 59 (X)

Clark Taylor exits a motel room and heads for his truck. Inside, Lynda lies in the shards of a glass coffee table as Darcy creeps out of the bathroom where she has been hiding. (X)

Lynda and Darcy stare at the doorway for a long time.

LYNDA

Musicians stink.

Darcy moves to Lynda now, sinks in her mother's arms, now she turns and helps her mother up on the couch. She examines Lynda's face, touching a bruised cheek; licks the blood from a scratch on her forehead.

They just lie there.

DARCY

It's my fault.

LYNDA

What are you talking about?

CONTINUED

59 CONTINUED 59

DARCY
He didn't want a kid around.

LYNDA
He said he wanted a kid. He said he wanted you. Been after me for months. I would divorce Melvin and he would adopt you.

DARCY
Didn't Johnny Pike say that? (X)

After a moment.

LYNDA
Yeah.

DARCY
What did Johnny Pike play? (X)

LYNDA
Bass.

Lynda gets up wearily from the couch, picks up the pieces of glass. Darcy helps her.

DARCY
How're we gonna pay for this?

LINDA
With a job.

DARCY
What job?

LYNDA
I don't know -- a job.

DARCY
At the donut shop?

LYNDA
Maybe not a donut shop again.
(smiles)
Maybe a donut shop.

DARCY
It doesn't matter, Ma.

Lynda sighs.

LYNDA
Or cocktail waitress ---

59 CONTINUED - 2 59

DARCY
I'll have to help you.

LYNDA
What are you talking about?

DARCY
Don!t you remember? Last time you flunked. You thought a Moscow Mule was a King Alfonse and a King Alfonse was a Moscow Mule? And then you had the fight with the bartender?

A heel is broken in Lynda's shoe. She throws it against the wall.

LYNDA
I remember.

DARCY
I think I want to go home.

Silence.

LYNDA
I can't go home, honey.

DARCY
I know it's hard without a car for you. But you know I only have to walk to school.

Lynda looks at her.

LYNDA
You miss school.

DARCY
I miss my friends.

LYNDA
And Daddy?

After a moment.

DARCY
I don't miss him.
(after another moment)
Yeah, I miss him.

CONTINUED

59 CONTINUED - 3 59

LYNDA
Me, too ---

DARCY
(jumping up)
Good!

LYNDA
(jumping up)
But, I wouldn't go back to that sonofabitch if he were the last man on earth!

DARCY
Don't swear, Mama.

LYNDA
I'm sorry.

She touches Darcy.

LYNDA
C'm'on, I'll walk you to the bus.

Lynda makes her way across the room, picks up the broken shoe, strips the padding off the sole, takes out a ten-dollar bill.

60 INT. BUS TERMINAL - RENO - DAY 60 (X)

Lynda coming away from the ticket window, counting her change, a couple of dollars. She presses the ticket into Darcy's hand. Now she moves to the lunch counter.

61 LYNDA'S POINT OF VIEW - A LUNCH COUNTER CUSTOMER 61

sitting at the counter, chewing on a ham sandwich. Lynda looks at the sandwich warily.

LYNDA
You're not eating here. Take a seat, honey, I'll be right back.

62 ANOTHER ANGLE - LUNCH COUNTER 62

Lynda undoing a grocery bag. Pulls out a loaf of Italian bread.

LYNDA
(to the Counterman)
Hey, you got a knife?

62 CONTINUED 62

He turns around from the sandwich board, Lynda smiles. He hands her the knife. She cuts the loaf in half.

Reaches for a jar of mustard resting on the counter. Smears the bread.

Now she removes a packet of ham from the grocery bag, lays the whole, thick stack on one of the slabs of bread. She steals a leaf of lettuce from a plate that hasn't been cleared, presses it on the ham, covers the concoction with a second slab of bread. Wraps the sandwich up in the waxed bread paper.

COUNTERMAN
Now how about something to drink?

Lynda opens her palm to the nickel and dime that remain.

LYNDA
Give us a Milky Way.

The Counterman flips her a Milky Way, she opens it, breaks it in half, hands half to Darcy. They walk out, munching on their halves of candy bar.

63 EXT. BUS BAYS - RENO BUS STATION - DAY 63 (X)

Lynda kisses Darcy at the door. Darcy climbs up, moves to a seat on the bus, Lynda following her from the platform. Darcy takes a seat, opens her brown bag.

64 ON DARCY 64

waving to Lynda, reaching into the bag, lifting out the sandwich, takes a huge bite.

She flashes the "okay" sign.

65 ON LYNDA 65

The bus is thrown into gear, Lynda waves hysterically as the bus backs out.

And then all of a sudden it disappears.

66 EXT. RENO STREET - GO-GO SALOON - DAY - LYNDA 66 (X)

walking down a Reno street. The sound of music coming from a doorway. She looks through the window.

CONTINUED

67 OMITTED 67 (X)

68 EXT. GABBS - DAY - BUS STOP 68 (X)

The bus arrives. Darcy gets off -- runs to Melvin. They hug. (X)

69 BAGGING ROOM - BASIC MANUFACTURING - GABBS, NEVADA 69

Melvin is seated astride a crate in front of a bagging machine. He holds open the bag, the magnesium oxide powder pours out, the machine seals the bag. Melvin heaves it on a treadmill behind.

At the base of the treadmill is Little Red, sacking the bags on a pallet as they come off. A forklift reaches in, plucks the pallet, and shovels it onto a trailer outside.

The whistle blows. Melvin hits a button -- the machine stops.

Melvin reaches for his lunch pail. Opens it. The remains of a sandwich, encrusted with staleness. He snaps it shut, follows Little Red out onto the loading platform. They jump down, move into the weigh-shack.

70 INT./EXT. WAREHOUSE AREA - DAY 70 (X)

A gauge for a scale, a radiator, a five-gallon coffee urn.

It is cold out and when they enter the shack, their breath vaporizes. They sit on the edge of the radiator.

MELVIN
Your coffee's on.

LITTLE RED
I always leave it on.

MELVIN
How long's it been on?

LITTLE RED
What's the date today?

CONTINUED

70 CONTINUED 70

MELVIN
Twenty-fourth, twenty-fifth ---

LITTLE RED
Twenty-four, twenty-five days. I start it on the first of the month.

Little Red looks at Melvin.

LITTLE RED
You can't go on like this, Mel.

MELVIN
Like what?

LITTLE RED
Moonin' like a baby. Lynda'll come back. They always do -- take me, I can't stand my wife.

MELVIN
You told me.

LITTLE RED
But I always go back. I'm going back this weekend. You wanna come?

MELVIN
See your wife?

LITTLE RED
I got a sister.

MELVIN
You got a sister?

Little Red reaches for a coffee cup.

MELVIN
She short like you with red hair?

LITTLE RED
Tall with blue. Takes tolls on the Golden Gate Bridge. You'll like her.

Little Red places the cup under the coffee spout. It doesn't flow. He tips the urn, now releases the spigot, the coffee spurts out.

Follow the coffee from the spout to the floor. On the floor, a hole has been worn, like a crater, from the drippings of the coffee.

70 CONTINUED - 2 70

LITTLE RED
What do you say, Melvin?

Melvin sighs, looking at the hole in the floor.

MELVIN
I don't want to go to San Francisco, Red. But I'll hitch a ride with you to Reno.

71 EXT. GABBS HIGHWAY - LATE AFTERNOON 71 (X)

Melvin driving, Little Red beside him. Little Red is drunk. He reaches for his bottle, takes a pull, tries to hand it to Melvin.

LITTLE RED
Here you go, Mel.

MELVIN
Put that stuff away.

LITTLE RED
You sure are good, Mel.

72 ON LITTLE RED 72

half-asleep, occasionally lighting a cigarette, smoking it dreamily.

73 ANOTHER ANGLE 73

Little Red sleeping in the front seat. Suddenly he leaps up, Melvin almost swerves off the road.

LITTLE RED
What happened?

MELVIN
You dropped your cigarette!

Smoke pours up from under Little Red. He jumps out of the car.

MELVIN
You little red asshole!

Melvin whips off his jacket, starts beating away at the smoking seat. Little Red is running around outside of the

73 CONTINUED 73

car, cooling himself. Finally, Melvin who is making no headway, rips the whole seat out from its slides, throws it in the road.

MELVIN
Now you drive. And stay awake!

Little Red dutifully climbs into the driver's seat. Melvin lays down in the rear, goes to sleep.

74 EXT. MUSTANG RANCH - NIGHT 74 (X)

The car is stopped. Melvin coughs, wakes up.

75 MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW 75

Little Red is gone. It is night.

Nothing around but desert. Melvin peers in another direction. A barbed-wire fence, a group of trailers, elevated guard tower, spotlights.

MELVIN
Oh, no.

76 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN 76

climbing out of the car, walking slowly to a high gate made of hurricane fencing. He tries the knob, nothing happens. Jiggles it.

A Voice booms out over the desert.

VOICE
Yes?

MELVIN
You got a little red-haired guy in there?

VOICE
Name?

MELVIN
Little Red.

VOICE
Just a minute.

CONTINUED

76 CONTINUED 76

Melvin cups his hands, blows air through them, stomps his feet in the cold.

VOICE
He's here.

Melvin jiggles the gate again.

VOICE
What do you want?

MELVIN
Him.

VOICE
Are you a customer?

MELVIN
No, sir, I'm not.

VOICE
'Ma'am'---

MELVIN
No, ma'am, I'm not.

VOICE
We can't let you in unless you're a customer.

MELVIN
I don't want to get laid, ma'am. I just want my buddy.

VOICE
Hold on.

The wind whistles, a coyote calls. Melvin stomps his feet.

VOICE
Sorry ---

Melvin looks around the desert, shrugs. He walks back to the car, climbs into the driver's seat, reaches for the ignition.

No key.

77 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN 77

climbing slowly out of the car, jiggling the gate again. (X)

CONTINUED

77 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN 77 (X)

VOICE
What do you want?

MELVIN
I'd like to get laid.

The gate buzzes, Melvin moves through, walks up to the trailer. He presses a buzzer, a face appears at the window, lets him in.

78 INT. TRAILER - NIGHT 78 (X)

MADAM
Welcome to the Cottontail Ranch.

MELVIN
Thank you, ma'am.

There are a couple of security men lolling in the lounge.

MADAM
Your friend's with Tina in 4, right down the hall.

Melvin starts down the hall.

MADAM
Just a minute ---

Melvin keeps walking, the security man blocks his path.

MADAM
It'll cost you twenty-two fifty.

MELVIN
You're kidding.

The security man moves a step closer.

MELVIN
I got a problem ---

MADAM
What's your problem?

MELVIN
I don't have twenty-two fifty.

MADAM
What have you got?

CONTINUED

78 CONTINUED 78

MELVIN
I got shit. My wife's left me, my little girl's home with my brother's family, I almost got burned up in a car, and now my best buddy's crapped out in a cathouse in the middle of the desert! (X)

After a moment.

MADAM
I see.

MELVIN
Let me get my buddy.

MADAM
You can't go back there for less than twenty-two fifty.

MELVIN
All I want's the key to the car. You can have him.

MADAM
I don't know what to tell you, son. We don't make the rules. The county does. Twenty dollars for the trick. A dollar for a towel. A dollar-fifty deposit on the towel.

Melvin looks at his watch.

MELVIN
Lynda give this to me for my thirtieth birthday ---

She takes the watch from him.

MELVIN
You get the phases of the moon ---

MADAM
Our girls know the phases of the moon.

She hands the watch back. Melvin shifts, parts a curtain on the window.

MELVIN
Tell you what. He's got a brand new spare tire on the Monaco -- four-ply radial -- non-skid -- whitewall ---

CONTINUED

78 CONTINUED- 2 78

MADAM
What am I going to do with a tire?

MELVIN
(points at the security man)
I don't know, maybe you can hang it on his dick!

The security man smiles.

MELVIN
(to the Madam)
Help me, lady.

She drums her fingers.

MADAM
Go get your friend.

79 INT. TRAILER CORRIDOR - NIGHT 79 (X)

The security man buzzes Melvin through a door, and Melvin moves down the curtain corridor, opens the door to number 4.

79-A INT. TRAILER ROOM #4 - NIGHT 79-A (X)

A pretty girl, Tina, is practicing tap dancing on a practice board in a corner of the room. Little Red is resting on the edge of the bed, his head slumped on his chest. All his clothes are off except one shoe and a sock. He holds the shoe in one hand. He is fast asleep.

TINA
That's as far as he got. Our license requires we give him thirty minutes -- he's got seven to go.

Melvin looks down at Little Red.

MELVIN
Give me a hand here.

Tina gets up, Melvin lays Little Red on his back, together they start to dress him.

MELVIN
You married, Tina?

CONTINUED

79-A CONTINUED 79-A

TINA
I got a kid in Carson City, my husband's in Reno. My mother's in Vegas and you just passed my father out in the hallway.

MELVIN
Lord.

Tina is struggling with Little Red pants.

TINA
You do his fly. I don't want to catch him in it.

Melvin sighs.

MELVIN
You sure got a sense of humor. My name's Melvin Dummar. Let me shake your hand, Tina.

Tina shakes Melvin's hand. Their eyes meet.

TINA
You married, Melvin?

Melvin beams, looks down at Red, dressed all lopsidedly, still sound asleep.

MELVIN
Where could we put this if we wanted to share a few minutes together?

TINA
In the hallway. No one will know the difference.

They heave Little Red onto a chair outside the crib. Prop him up, and close the curtain on him.

MELVIN
There's only one problem.

TINA
What's that?

MELVIN
I haven't got twenty-two fifty.

TINA
That's all right, he's still got seven minutes. And besides, my watch just stopped.

CONTINUED

79-B RENO - NIGHT - MELVIN AND LITTLE RED 79-B

speeding along, approaching Reno, the neon beckoning.

80 EXT. MOTEL - RENO - NIGHT 80

Melvin exits Little Red's car and enters the motel office. Little Red drives off.

81 LYNDA'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT 81 (X)

Melvin enters, looks into the unmade bed, checks the sheets. Now moves into the bathroom. Spies some false eyelashes on the shelf. Examines them between his fingers.

Now he sits down on the commode. As he does, he sees the fringe and tassels of a go-go costume, lovingly laid out to dry on a towel. He picks it up, holds it away from himself. Now he brings it close, smells it, buries his nose in the tiny swatch of material.

82 INT. GO-GO SALOON - RENO - NIGHT - MELVIN 82 (X)

muscling his way through the crowded casino, up to the scattered characters at the bar.

83 LYNDA 83

dancing go-go, kind of enjoying it.

84 GO-GO DANCER 84

next to Lynda; her name is Lucy and her arm is in a cast. She pokes Lynda's elbow, tries to yell over the noise. (X)

LUCY
A guy's waving at you over there.

Lynda looks down.

LYNDA
Oh my God, it's Melvin.

She dances off in the other direction, but Melvin runs around the bar following her. She dances back the other way now, but Melvin has leaped up on the stage and pulled the plug on the speaker. He carries a suitcase.

CONTINUED

84 CONTINUED 84

Silence in the bar. Two security men head towards Melvin.

MELVIN
You come home with me, Lynda. Get out of this place and come home with your husband, Melvin Dummar.

A Voice from the crowd.

VOICE
You go home, Melvin.

ANOTHER VOICE
Yeah, go on home, Melvin.

Lynda looks on helplessly.

MELVIN
Lynda, you're my wife! Now come home!

The security men leap on the bar.

MELVIN
Git outa these bars, Lynda, and come back where you belong.

LYNDA
I won't!

MELVIN
You gotta!

LYNDA
I can't!

MELVIN
Why not?!

LYNDA
I love to dance!

LUCY
(hugging Lynda)
Oh, Lynda! You make me feel so good.

Melvin throws off the security men, and rips open the suitcase.

MELVIN
All right, you like these damn bars?! Then you can live in these damn bars!

CONTINUED

84 CONTINUED - 2 84

LYNDA
How's Darcy?

MELVIN
She's fine!

Melvin strews Lynda's clothes on the bar, shirts, pants, underwear.

LYNDA
Oh Jeezus, Melvin.

Now as the security men charge Melvin a last time, he leaps off the bar, at the same time throws a torrent of fringe and tassels at Lynda.

Lynda catches them in the face, they stop her. She reaches down and picks a few up.

LYNDA
He cut up my best Day-Glo.

The owner plugs in the music, instantly the girls resume dancing. Melvin threads his way out to catcalls and a single "Attaboy, Melvin!"

The owner beckons Lynda.

JERRY
How often does this happen, Lynda?

LYNDA
I'm sorry, Jerry.

JERRY
I feel for you and everything, but you know it's not the best thing for business ---

LYNDA
I know, I know.
(sighs)
I was quittin' anyway.

She heads for her dressing room.

84-1-A EXT. GO-GO CLUB - NIGHT - MELVIN 84-1-A

stomps off into the night.

84-1-B RENO BUS STATION - NIGHT - AN OUTBOUND BUS 84-1-B

pulls out of the station, Melvin sitting alone in the back.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

84-A EXT. RENO OUTSKIRTS - DAY - MELVIN 84-A

burning up the road in Little Red's car, Darcy riding with him this time. (X)

85 INT. CLUB 29 - RENO - LATE AFTERNOON 85 (X)

Another saloon -- Lynda in another go-go costume, serving drinks now. The Owner leans over her shoulder.

OWNER
Someone here to see you.

Lynda looks up. It is Melvin.

LYNDA
Oh God.

She walks right up to him.

LYNDA
What do you want, Melvin?

MELVIN
No fights, no bickering -- just carrying out the law, plain and simple.
(hands her a paper)
Interlocutory decree. She's final in six weeks.
(hands her a ring)
And my wedding ring -- keep yours if you like.

LYNDA
Aw, Melvin.

MELVIN
I'll be seein' you, Lynda.

He stalks off. She unfolds the document.

LYNDA
Hey, wait a minute! What's it say about Darcy in here?

MELVIN
I get custody.

CONTINUED

85 CONTINUED 85

LYNDA
What do you mean, you get custody?

MELVIN
No daughter of mine's going to hang around these bars.

Lynda throws the tray of drinks she is carrying in his face.

Melvin comes up spitting, reaches over the bar for a customer's glass of beer and throws it at Lynda -- The Owner jumps on the bar, grabs Melvin by the neck.

OWNER
Now, wait a minute!

MELVIN
(loosing himself)
I was goin' anyway.

Melvin turns on his heel and walks out.

OWNER
(exasperated)
Hey, look, Lynda ---

LYNDA
Never mind. I quit.

She draws the string on her go-go costume, it drops to the floor in front of the astounded Owner and patrons. And now, with the utmost dignity, Lynda, all naked, strides to the dressing room past the gawks of the bewildered customers.

85-A EXT. CLUB 29 - MAGIC HOUR 85-A

Melvin leaps into Red's car beside Darcy, roars off with tires smoking. A fender falls off into the street. Melvin keeps going. (X)

86 EXT. RENO STREET - LUCY'S HOUSE - NIGHT 86 (X)

A house on a side street, the Reno neon glitter burning bright in the b.g. Lynda walks to the door.

86-A INT. LUCY'S HOUSE - NIGHT 86-A

Lucy picks up Lynda's bag, leads her to a bedroom.

86-B INT. LUCY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 86-B

Lucy turns on the light. The room is a mess, but cozy.

CONTINUED

86-B CONTINUED 86-B

LYNDA
Gee -- and I almost had to spend the night with some sonofabitch lawyer.

LUCY
Are there any other kind?

LYNDA
I just want to get my little girl back. My husband's divorcing me.

LUCY
Why?

LYNDA
Because he can't make any money and it makes him feel bad.

Lynda pitches her bag on the bed, starts undressing. Lucy hangs up her clothes.

LYNDA
So I can stay here as long as I want?

LUCY
Long as you want. Until your baby comes. Don't ask me how, I always know.

LYNDA
And did you know I'll never see the father again?

LUCY
Don't worry, kid. You'll get an abortion, it'll all be over ---

LYNDA
(interrupting)
Oh, no, I had one of those. I kept dreaming of bunnies drowning.

Lynda climbs under the covers.

LUCY
I'll bet I know what that means ---

LYNDA
Don't tell me. I'm just not going to do it again.

CONTINUED

86-B CONTINUED - 2 86-B

LUCY
Melvin knocked you up. That bastard.

LYNDA
Maybe Melvin. Maybe not Melvin. Melvin's okay.

LUCY
You mean we like Melvin? A few kind men left in this world, right? But we're leaving him, right?

LYNDA
Melvin's left me.

LUCY
What are you going to do now?

LYNDA
Same thing I always do. Go home to Mother.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

87 LOS ANGELES - FREEWAYS - DAY - ESTABLISHING SHOT 87

down the San Diego past Disneyland.

88 BEHIND DISNEYLAND - LYNDA'S MOTHER'S HOUSE 88

A sea of tract houses. Zoom in on one, any one. The Sisk's dog, "Tramp" is outside. We see some girls on bicycles go by and two boys tossing a football.

89 INT. LYNDA'S MOTHER'S HOUSE - DAY 89

Lynda sits on a couch in a pair of pregnant hot pants and a bra watching television.

Lynda is eight months pregnant. Her mother, Mrs. Sisk, sits beside her. The dog, "Tramp" wanders in.

MRS. SISK
You want something cold to drink, Lynda?

LYNDA
No thanks, Ma.

MRS. SISK
I'm going out for a few minutes.

LYNDA
Okay, Ma.

MRS. SISK
Anything happens, call a cab to take you to the hospital.

LYNDA
Nothing's going to happen, Ma.

The door slams.

90 OMITTED 90

91 LYNDA ON THE COUCH 91

watching the TV set. She reaches for a book, "The Magic of Believing." Glances at it, then back at the TV set.

Now she looks at the phone.

92 INT. MELVIN'S TRAILER - DAY 92

Melvin is fixing breakfast. Chaos. Toasters, griddle cakes,

92 CONTINUED 92

pop up tarts. Bubbling coffee pot. Whirring milkshake blender. Vegamatic. Darcy is watching "Easy Street" on television. Melvin has his eye on it.

93 ON THE TV 93

WALLY
And here we go with the Gateway to Easy Street!

A lady dressed like a phonograph record can't decide which gate to choose.

94 ON MELVIN AND DARCY 94

DARCY
Gate number 2.

MELVIN
Gate number 1. (X)

The lady chooses door number one -- she wins. Melvin's face lights up. (X)

WALLY
And you've entered it, madam, the Golden Gate! Inside....

The gate swings open. (X)

WALLY
A brand new camera and! -- a trip to Hawaii on United Airlines -- United, the <u>friendly</u> airline --- (X)

MELVIN
I told you! I told you!

Melvin claps his hands with delight.

DARCY
Geez ---

MELVIN
Whatsa matter?

DARCY
I'm jealous, Daddy.

CONTINUED

94 CONTINUED 94

MELVIN
Aw no, honey, it'a a wonderful thing -- lookit that -- Hawaii -- the friendly skies -- look! -- look how happy she is! -- aw gee, she's embarrassed -- Wally kissed her --- (X)

The telephone rings.

CONTINUED

94 CONTINUED 94

Darcy turns the television set off, tumbles outside and climbs on her bike. Past the windows of the trailer, riding lazily in the dusty twilight, past dogs, past a kid on a wagon, past a basket of laundry.

Melvin picks up the phone. Darcy keeps riding around the trailer.

MELVIN
Hullo?

LYNDA
Hello, Melvin?

MELVIN
Hey, Lynda. How's it going?

LYNDA
How's what going?

MELVIN
I dunno, whatever you got going.

LYNDA
Could Darcy come down and see me?

MELVIN
You pregnant?

LYNDA
What do you mean, am I pregnant?! What do you say a thing like that for?!!

MELVIN
I dunno. You sound pregnant. For what other reason would you ask me to let Darcy go down there and hang around them bars?

LYNDA
I don't go to bars, Melvin.

MELVIN
And that air in L.A. All that smog. All them people. How pregnant are you? For your sake, you better hope it's a girl.

LYNDA
What are you talking about, Melvin?

CONTINUED

94 CONTINUED - 2 94

MELVIN
Because if it's a boy and it looks like Clark Halsted, I'm going to kill it.

LYNDA
I just want to see Darcy.

MELVIN
And then I'm going to kill you.
(after a moment)
I'd rather have you come up.

LYNDA
Where?

MELVIN
Las Vegas. We'll do it in Las Vegas. I'll marry you there.

LYNDA
You just divorced me, Melvin. What do you want to marry me for?

MELVIN
I don't want my little girl having illegitimate kin.

LYNDA
Melvin?

MELVIN
Yes, honey?

LYNDA
I've been reading this book 'The Magic of Believing.'

MELVIN
Yeah, what's that?

LYNDA
It's about you.

MELVIN
(smiling)
Hey.

LYNDA
It says you can be anything you want to be if you'll just believe in yourself. And you believe in yourself -- it's just the believing

94 CONTINUED - 3 94

LYNDA (Cont'd)
hasn't been enough to let you become what you belive you can be.

MELVIN
Rome wasn't built in a day. We'll keep plugging.

LYNDA
I've been thinking, Melvin. I haven't been good to you. I haven't believed in you like you believe in you.

MELVIN
How's insurance sound to you?

LYNDA
Insurance. Real estate. Anything but bagging at Basic.

MELVIN
Yeah, the ol' paycheck-to-paycheck. Frustratin', when I know I was born for something else.

LYNDA
You really want to marry me, Melvin?

Mrs. Sisk enters (she's been eavesdropping) and frantically, silently, signals "No! Not again!" (X)

MELVIN
I heard you was livin' with whores over in Reno.

LYNDA
I knew you didn't.

MELVIN
But I want you to know I'm not going to hold it against you, however ---

LYNDA
Melvin, don't start gettin' around me now ---

MELVIN
Aw, honey, I want to get around you. I been missin' you. Miss your lovin' ---

He starts to sing over the telephone.

CONTINUED

94 CONTINUED - 4 94

MELVIN
(singing)
'My woman, my woman, my wife ---'

95 EXT. GAS STATION - LAS VEGAS - DAY - MELVIN AND LITTLE RED 95

are waiting in Little Red's car, which has been specially spruced and decorated for the occasion; as has Little Red. A replacement fender is in evidence.

96 INT. GAS STATION RESTROOM - DAY - LYNDA 96

waits as Darcy struggles with the ties on an 8-month pregnant sateen suit, bought for the wedding.

Now she presents herself to Darcy.

LYNDA
How do I look?

DARCY
(worshipful)
Fat. But nice.

97 EXT. GAS STATION - DAY - LITTLE RED 97

drives to the door of the restroom. Melvin leaps out and swings the door open. Darcy helps Lynda in.

98 EXT. SILVER BELL WEDDING CHAPEL - LAS VEGAS BLVD. - DAY 98

Melvin helps Lynda out. He is dressed in boots, spurs, double-knit pants and his best cowboy roses shirt.

Before they go inside, he gives his hair a lick with his comb. Then he takes Darcy and gives her hair a lick with his comb, wipes the comb off and puts it back in his pocket.

99 INT. SILVER BELL WEDDING CHAPEL - DAY 99

A tiny room with ice-cream chairs and a white pulpit under an arbor of wax flowers.

The Owner, a kindly, fat woman is at her desk at front.

MELVIN
e're the Dummars.

OWNER
t yet, you're 'The Dummars.'

MELVIN
a yeah, we're the Dummars and we're etting married again.

OWNER
nderful! Were you with us the st time? We've had a lot of peaters -- repeaters are our vorite folks.

MELVIN
o, ma'am.

OWNER
(to Lynda)
ould you like a veil?

over at Melvin.

MELVIN
ow much is a veil?

OWNER
ur dollars.

toning "don't."

MELVIN
'll take a veil.

ds Lynda a pink veil.

LYNDA
got a blue one? To go with suit?

OWNER
got white. The second time and the girls like a color.

MELVIN
'll take white.

OWNER
on the music ---

CONTINUED

99 CONTINUED - 2 99

MELVIN
What have you got?

OWNER
We have Inspirational, 'Because,' we have Hawaiian, the 'War Chant,' we have ---

LYNDA
'Because.'

MELVIN
'Hawaiin War Chant.'

They look at each other.

LYNDA
'Hawaiian War Chant.'

OWNER
Very good. That's five dollars on the veil, five dollars on the music, fifteen dollars for the ceremony, four dollars for the license, ten dollars for the witnesses -- thirty-nine dollars all together.

Melvin reaches in his pocket, pulls out all his money.

OWNER
Thirty-nine out of forty. Thank you.

She hands Melvin a dollar back.

MELVIN
That don't leave us much for breakfast. I wasn't counting on the witnesses.

The Owner indicates a terribly decrepit old couple, waiting in an ante-room in two chairs, wearing their Sunday best.

OWNER
Well, they've got to make a living, too.

Darcy tugs on the Owner's arm who is pressing button behind her desk.

DARCY
A bag of rice, please.

CONTINUED

99 CONTINUED - 3 99

OWNER
Well aren't you sweet, honey?

She hands Darcy a bag of rice and collects fifty cents.

The Hawaiian War Chant starts. The lights lower. A Justice of the Peace materializes behind the pulpit. And Lynda and Melvin, with Darcy behind them, move stately down the aisle.

100 PULPIT - JUSTICE OF THE PEACE 100

JP
'Til death do us part.'

MELVIN
'Til death do us part.'

JP
Lynda and Melvin, I now pronounce you man and wife.

Melvin and Lynda kiss.

LYNDA
This is it, Melvin.

He hugs her tight.

MELVIN
Ooh, you got a fat belly, woman.

The witnesses come forward. The Old Lady kisses Melvin and the old man busses Lynda -- a long long time. They all start up back the aisle -- Darcy is throwing rice.

The old man falters. The wedding party stops.

OLD LADY
What's the matter, George?
(to Lynda and Melvin)
He gets weak in the heat -- I better take him home.

They turn to go, the Owner pays them off at the desk and they leave.

OWNER
Now what am I going to do? I got three couples coming in at eleven ---

101 MONTAGE - MELVIN, LYNDA AND DARCY 101

Outside, Melvin and Lynda saying good-bye to Little Red; inside, witnessing a dozen marriages. Kissing their opposites. Darcy scattering bags of rice. Melvin enjoying immensely.

102 EXT. SILVER BELL CHAPEL - THAT NIGHT 102

Melvin is drying himself with a towel, Lynda has loosened her suit and her stomach hangs over pants, Darcy asleep in the car.

OWNER
(paying Melvin)
That's 12 couples at ten dollars each -- 120 dollars --
(looks up)
And may I say you were wonderful! You're so in love -- it's good for business. Come back as witnesses anytime.
(reaches into her drawer)
And here's some party packets -- five dollars free at Caesar's Palace -- five dollars free at the Sands -- five dollars free at the Desert Inn -- Love ya both!

103 VEGAS MONTAGE - NIGHT - LYNDA, MELVIN AND DARCY 103

eating, drinking, dancing, playing the slots. Darcy hitting nickel jackpots, Melvin buying chances on classic cars, Lynda spraying complimentary perfume.

104 ANOTHER ANGLE - THE DUMMARS 104

at the Desert Inn. Melvin, Lynda and Darcy playing auto-poker. They hit a flush. Cheers.

105 thru 111 EXT. DAIRY - DAWN 105 thru 111

Dairy work montage. Bonnie and Jim Delgado are out on the loading dock with Melvin, George, Pete and Ralph. Other drivers are pulling in, loading and driving out.

112 INT. ROCKWOOD DIARY - BELLFLOWER - THE DRIVER'S ROOM 112

Melvin walking to the Cashier's window, pushes a stack of bills through the cage.

MELVIN
That's 225, Bonnie.

CONTINUED

112 CONTINUED 112

She counts it.

BONNIE
225 is right.

MELVIN
I tell you I'm going to win that color TV. I'm going to be Milkman of the Month. (X)

BONNIE
Well, you're in the lead, Melvin.
(smiles)
And you want to know something? I'm rooting for you.

She blushes.

MELVIN
You married, Bonnie?

But Bonnie doesn't answer, folds up the money, starts to turn back to her desk.

BONNIE
Hey -- almost forgot -- Bill wants to see you.

112-A INT. BILL'S OFFICE - DAIRY - DAY - MELVIN 112-A

walks down the hall, enters an inner office. A sign "JIM DELGADO, Assistant Manager." (X)

JIM (X)
Listen, Melvin, I just want to tell you, you been doin' real good!

MELVIN
Why, thank you.

JIM (X)
Only thing is -- you know that engine that blowed up your first week -- I talked to Mr. Rockwood -- there's just no way we can see to doing anything but deducting it ---

MELVIN
Now, wait a minute ---

CONTINUED

112-A CONTINUED 112-A

JIM
We'll take it real slow, just a few dollars a week ---

MELVIN
That wasn't my fault -- you give me that old junker -- the motor was shot.

JIM
You signed the note, Melvin ---

MELVIN
Didn't you know I was in the lead for the Zenith 197K with the tri-focus picture tube?

JIM
What can I tell you, Melvin? We figure Driver of the Month on net -- and with your deductions coming up ---

He shrugs. Suddenly, Melvin reaches across and grabs him by the shirt.

MELVIN
Listen, you sonofabitch, that color TV is mine! That's for me! My wife and my little girl! Deduct whatever the hell you want, but you know it and I know it -- I am the goddamn Driver of the Month!

Bill is choking.

JIM
Let go, Melvin.

Melvin doesn't let go.

JIM
Let go, or don't come back tomorrow.

Melvin releases him.

MELVIN
What do you say?!

JIM
You're a good driver, Melvin ---

CONTINUED

112-A CONTINUED - 2 112-A

MELVIN
Driver of the Month! Twenty new damn accounts!

JIM (X)
I'm sorry about the engine, Melvin -- but it's your responsibility ---

MELVIN
Am I or am I not?!

CONTINUED

112-A CONTINUED - 2 112-A

Jim waits.

JIM
You'll pay for the engines?

MELVIN
I asked you, you bastard, am I Driver of the Month?!

JIM
You are.

MELVIN
And do I get the color TV?

After a moment.

JIM
Okay.

Melvin nods.

MELVIN
Deduct your goddam engine.

A-113 EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY A-113

Melvin walks up the ramp to the main entrance.

113 INT. HOSPITAL - ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA - BABY NURSERY - CORRIDOR - DAY 113

Melvin passes among a few visitors, patients and medical staff. He stops at the nursery where a baby is raised to the window. Nurses attend to several other infants.

114 CLOSEUP - MELVIN 114

registers nothing.

115 INT. LYNDA'S ROOM - DAY - LYNDA 115

waiting, looking up at the ceiling. Melvin enters. There is a long silence. Two other women lie quietly in their beds.

LYNDA
I'm sorry, Melvin.

CONTINUED

115 CONTINUED 115

MELVIN
He's got them beady eyes and that slack tongue. Looks just like Clark Taylor. (X)

LYNDA
He could be yours, Melvin.

CONTINUED

115 CONTINUED 115

MELVIN
Mine!

LYNDA
You remember the morning the car was repossessed?

MELVIN
You mean the morning you woke me up to say good-bye?

Silence.

LYNDA
I am sorry, Melvin. I prayed. I prayed for a little girl.

Lynda doesn't move.

MELVIN
Jee-zus!

He strides into the bathroom. The sound of him urinating.

Two nurses appear. One has a stack of photographs.

(X)

NURSE BURNS
Hello, everybody! What we have here is a few pictures taken at delivery -- Miss Crockett and I work together -- she photographs -- I process.

MELVIN
(returning) (X)
I'll bet you do. You married, Miss Crockett?

NURSE BURNS
I'm Miss Burns. My partner's Miss Crockett.

MELVIN
How do you do, Miss Crockett.

LYNDA
No thank you, Miss Burns.

MELVIN
How much?

CONTINUED

115 CONTINUED - 2 115

NURSE CROCKETT (X)
A hundred and twenty dollars for five beautiful color prints.

LYNDA
A hundred and twenty dollars! You got some racket! Git outa here!

MELVIN
Wait a minute -- let me see 'em.

Miss Burns shows him the pictures. Melvin giggles -- then he giggles some more. Miss Crockett exits the room. (X)

MELVIN
Belly button looks like a corkscrew.

LYNDA
Tell her to go away, Melvin.

Melvin looks some more.

MELVIN
How much you gettin' for 'em? A hundred and twenty?

Nurse Burns clears her throat. Melvin looks at her nameplate heaving on her breast. (X)

MELVIN
Did I ask if you was married, Miss Burns?

LYNDA
Melvin!

MELVIN
We'll take 'em. I'll give you the cash tomorrow.

He snatches the pictures, grabs a pen from her breast pocket, scribbles something on the clipboard.

MELVIN
And my boy's name is Faron Dummar.

Hands her the clipboard.

MISS BURNS
What a good name.

MELVIN
He's a good boy.

CONTINUED

115 CONTINUED - 4 114

Lynda smiles. Miss Burns goes.

LYNDA
Melvin?

MELVIN
Yes, Lynda?

LYNDA
How's Darcy?

MELVIN
She's waiting downstairs. They won't let her come up.

LYNDA
Why not?

MELVIN
Hospital rules.

But the first nurse, Miss Crockett, reappears with Faron.

MISS CROCKETT
Dairy-time!

MELVIN
Gimme that baby and forget them jokes!

He snatches Faron, carries him gingerly over to Lynda. lays him beside her. She uncovers a breast.

Melvin watches tensely. The two nurses leave the room.

Now Melvin seems to relax. He starts to hum, he begins to sing a lullaby of his own making.

Everything peaceful. Darcy appears secretively at the door. He motions her to come in. He is still singing as Darcy climbs on his lap to watch her mother nurse.

116 EXT. CHURCH OF THE LATTER DAY SAINTS - ANAHEIM - NIGHT 116 (X)

Music -- a chorus booming forth with "Now Thank We All Our God."

117 INT. CHURCH - NIGHT 117 (X)

The church empty, in the choir loft a chorus of thirty-five singers rehearsing. (X)

CONTINUED

117 CONTINUED 117

CHORUS
(singing)
'...Lord Sabaoth his name (X)
From age to age the same'

118 CLOSEUP - MELVIN 118

singing up a storm.

119 CLOSEUP - BONNIE 119

The Cashier at Rockwood Dairy. Singing and sneaking a look at Melvin.

CHIORMASTER
(singing)
'On earth is not his equal.'
(speaks)
That's it for tonight, folks.
See you on Sunday.

The group breaks up. Bonnie heads straight for Melvin, bumping into him accidentally. They walk to the parking lot together.

119-A EXT. CHURCH PARKING LOT - NIGHT 119-A

BONNIE
You have a lovely baritone, Melvin.

MELVIN
Why thank you, Bonnie.

BONNIE
Everybody thinks so, we're so pleased you joined us.

MELVIN
I dunno, I felt like getting back to the church. I tried them all when I was a kid, Nazarene, Four Square Gospel, Church of Christ, but Latter Day Saints -- I was born Mormon, you know -- only one ever made me happy.

BONNIE
Are you happy now?

CONTINUED

119-A CONTINUED 119-A

MELVIN
Can't seem to get ahead, Bonnie. The job 'n everything, you know -- bought too much car, I guess. Can't stand living under the same roof with my mother-in-law and not paying the mortgage -- baby clothes, baby furniture ---

BONNIE
The Church will help you.

MELVIN
I know, Bonnie. Mormons are kind. You got that Mormon aura, Bonnie.

They arrive at Melvin's truck.

MELVIN
Well, we'll just keep pluggin'.

BONNIE
(radiant)
What a beautiful attitude, Melvin.

120 INT. LYNDA'S MOTHER'S HOUSE - MORNING 120 (X) (X)

Melvin staggers in wearing his work clothes. The TV is switched to "Easy Street." Mrs. Sisk bustles around. Baby Faron is crying, Darcy is holding him, Lynda sips a drink. A neighbor can be seen outside mowing his lawn.

MELVIN
What are you doing?

LYNDA
Just a little brandy. They repossessed the car today.

Melvin shrugs.

MELVIN
It's okay.

LYNDA
Sure.

Faron starts to scream. Lynda takes him from Darcy, puts him on the breast.

Melvin takes off his shirt.

CONTINUED

120 CONTINUED 120

MELVIN
Whaddya got for supper?

LYNDA
Bell peppers.

MELVIN
I hate bell peppers.

LYNDA
I got bell peppers. How was God tonight?

DARCY
Ssh! -- it's the Gateway to 'Easy Street!'

Melvin's face lights up, looks at the screen.

DARCY
Gate number two.

LYNDA
Gate number one.

MELVIN
Gate number three.

121 TV SET 121

A Contestant dressed as a lady martian is in agony.

CONTESTANT
Gate number three.

WALLY WILLIAMS
Madam, you have entered the Golden Gate! Inside....

Gate number three revolves, revealing a large boat.

WALLY WILLIAMS
A Chris Craft with depth finder and ---

Suddenly, Melvin jumps out of his chair.

121-A HOLLYWOOD - TVC STUDIOS - DAY 121-A

Melvin and Lynda run through the main gate to TVC Studios, late. They rush towards the rear entrance of a sound stage,

CONTINUED

121-A CONTINUED 121-A

following the signs pointing to "Easy Street:"

LYNDA
(running)
I'll never do it.

MELVIN
(pulling her along)
You'll do it. I got confidence in you. Now remember, once you're at the Gateway, keep on betting up. Settle for nothing.

They enter the stage door and find themselves:

122 OMITTED 122

123 INT. BACKSTAGE - DAY 123

Passing ballerinas, comics, rope dancers, torch singers, jugglers, jews harp players putting last minute touches on their act, signing releases.

LYNDA
But suppose I'm a few hundred dollars ahead, my God, think what we could do with a few hundred dollars.

MELVIN
Try a few thousand?! Try them on for size! We'll be flying to Hawaii with cash besides! Be bold, baby!

LYNDA
Baby?

MELVIN
We're in show business now.

123-A THE EASY STREET NEON LOGO 123-A

goes berserk, signalling the start of the show.

123-B WALLY WILLIAMS 123-B

greets the audience to thunderous applause, calls Act # One on stage.

123-C ACT # ONE 123-C

performs their specialty. Wally Williams leads Act # One to the dias for the audience's judgement.

123-D MELVIN AND LYNDA 123-D

join in the applause for Act # One.

123-E ON STAGE 123-E

Wally now presents Act # One with a check for $500 and leads them to the Gateway.

WALLY WILLIAMS
Now it's time for the Gateway to Easy Street. There are three doors in front of us.
(to Act # One)
Now, which gate do you choose?

Act # One agonizes.

EUREKA
One.

The model swings open the gate, a platform jammed with tiles.

ANNOUNCER (v.o.)
200 square feet of...Z-Brick. Give character and elegance to your walls. From the family of Z-Brick Products. It's worth $276.60!

123-F MELVIN AND LYNDA 123-F

horrified at the prize.

123-G ON STAGE 123-G

Wally calls today's Act # Two on stage. They perform their material.

123-H WALLY 123-H

leads Act # Two to the dias, and invites the audience's judgement.

123-J THE AUDIENCE 123-J

loathed them. Amongst universal booing, hissing and shouts of "NO!", Melvin and Lynda applaud bravely.

123-K ON STAGE 123-K

Humiliated, Act # Two leaves the stage. Wally approaches the mike.

WALLY WILLIAMS
Now, from Anaheim, California, Mrs. Lynda Dummar, you are on!

123-L LYNDA 123-L

Down the ramp from the clapping audience, Lynda takes the stage, launches into her act.

123-M WALLY 123-M

races from the wings as Lynda completes her act. He leads her to the dias, turning to the audience.

WALLY WILLIAMS
How about Lynda Dummar, ladies and gentlemen?

123-N THE AUDIENCE 123-N

loved her. Wild applause. Melvin, amongst them, trying to catch his breath.

124 ON STAGE 124

Wally presents Lynda with the check for $500.

WALLY WILLIAMS
Now Lynda -- do you want to keep your five hundred dollars or do you want to bet it for what's behind one of the three gates to Easy Street?

Lynda looks at the Gateway, then at the money in Wally's hand.

125 MELVIN - IN THE AUDIENCE 125

trying valiantly to get Lynda's attention. Nodding his head like a marionette. The audience yelling "No! No!"

LYNDA
(tranced)
Okay.

Wally leads Lynda by the hand to the Big Gateway.

126 AUDIENCE 126

Melvin is signalling like crazy, raising three fingers, throwing the three fingers at Lynda.

Lynda looking from gate #1 to gate #2 to gate #3, the audience squealing advice.

127 MELVIN - IN AUDIENCE 127

flailing and throwing three fingers at Lynda.

MELVIN
Three!! Three!!

Lynda turns to Wally.

LYNDA
Two.

WALLY WILLIAMS
Gate number two...Carol!

Carol draws the curtain. The Announcer's voice comes over.

ANNOUNCER (v.o.)
The Sonny James Living Room Suite
by Berkline!

The model starts walking around the living room set.

ANNOUNCER (v.o.)
The arms have a saddlebag effect
with tufting in the seats and backs
for deep-down comfort. Complete
with tables and lamps! It retails
for...$1,307!

Lynda jumps up and down. Suddenly the air is filled with Bonus Golden Gate Fanfare. The audience goes insane.

128 MELVIN - IN THE AUDIENCE 128

MELVIN
That's my wife!

129 ON STAGE 129

Wally and Lynda hugging.

WALLY WILLIAMS
Lynda, you've done it! You've opened the Golden Gate! The Golden Gate to Easy Street! Look what else you've won.

Carol drive a golf cart on stage towing a piano.

ANNOUNCER (v.o.)
The Kimball Country French Artist Console -- including hand-carved cabinetry, grand-style side-hinged top and grand lyre. From Kimball ...It retails for...$1,700!

WALLY WILLIAMS
(to a staggered Lynda)
And with that new piano, you're probably gonna wanna have it tuned and take lessons. So you'll need a tuning fork and some sheet music, so to take care of those expenses take a look at the rest....

The revolve turns to reveal the flashing light board, which is flashing.

WALLY WILLIAMS
$10,000 in cash!
(applause)
That makes the total value of your Golden Gate...$11,700!
(applause)

130 MELVIN - IN AUDIENCE 130

falling off his chair.

131 ON STAGE 131

Music, applause, commotion, the credits rolling, Wally being kissed by a frantic Lynda, everybody taking bows.

CONTINUED

131 CONTINUED 131

WALLY WILLIAMS
Do you know what you're going to do with the money, sweetheart?

LYNDA
I sure do know what I'm going to do with the money.

132 INT. REAL ESTATE OFFICE - ANAHEIM - DAY 132 (X)

Melvin and Lynda are seated beside scale models of two houses. (X)

REAL ESTATE MAN
So which'll it be? The Landlord?! Or the Sentinel.

MELVIN
The Landlord!

LYNDA
How much are they again?

REAL ESTATE MAN
(elated)
The Landlord is 59,900!
(depressed)
And the Sentinel is 44,300.

LYNDA
We'll take the Sentinel.

MELVIN
Now wait a minute, honey ---

LYNDA
I won the goddamn money! And we're going to live in the goddamn Sentinel!

Go out on the fallen faces of Melvin and the Real Estate Man.

133 EXT. THE SENTINEL - ANAHEIM - DAY 133 (X)

A little house in a development on a quiet street.

134 INT. HOUSE - DAY 134 (X)

All the rooms empty but for the living room where the Sonny James living room suite by Berkline is laid out.

It doesn't look as good here.

135 ANOTHER ANGLE - LIVING ROOM - DARCY AND LYNDA 135

seated on the window sill, a pad and a pencil and some figures laid out in front of them.

CONTINUED

135 CONTINUED 135

LYNDA
If we're very, very careful ---

DARCY
Do I get the tap dancing lessons?

LYNDA
I think so.

DARCY
And my Girl Scout uniform?

LYNDA
I think we'll have to wait on that til next month, honey.

136 EXT./INT. HOUSE - DAY - DARCY'S POINT OF VIEW 136 (X)

looking out the window.

DARCY
Here comes Daddy.

Melvin rolls into the driveway, driving a Cadillac which pulls a boat cradle. On it rests a twenty-five-foot outboard. (X)

137 EXT. HOUSE - DAY - LYNDA 137 (X)

dazed by the sight of Melvin's possessions, staggers outside with Faron in her arms.

Over the fence, the neighbors are having a barbecue. The mother is taking pictures.

MELVIN
Hey, Ortiz! Give us a picture!

Mrs. Ortiz swings her camera around. Melvin poses proudly by the boat and the new car. Darcy and Lynda and Faron creep out to explore them.

Now Lynda straightens up.

LYNDA
(suddenly)
Take 'em back, Melvin!

MELVIN
I can't, I'd lose my down payment.

CONTINUED

137 CONTINUED 137

Melvin, with great proprietariness, slaps the fender of the Cadillac.

MELVIN
We got a lotta horses here, honey.

138 EXT. BACKYARD - DAY - MELVIN 138 (X)

is at the tiller of his boat. He wears a duck-billed cap, and in clipped tones is addressing a CB.

MELVIN
Come in Long Beach, come in...come in Long Beach Coast Guard, this is Country Roads ---

He looks up as the back door of the house opens, Lynda is holding a suitcase in one hand, Faron in the other. A taxi appears at the end of the driveway.

MELVIN
Where you goin'?

LYNDA
I'm leaving you, Melvin.

MELVIN
You can't leave me ---

LYNDA
Oh yes I can ---

MELVIN
You leave me now, I'm never takin' you back, Lynda.

LYNDA
I'm never coming back. And remember, half of the house is mine. I spoke to the real estate man ---

MELVIN
It was me got you on the show.

LYNDA
It was me won the money -- I get half.

CONTINUED

138 CONTINUED 138

MELVIN
You're gettin' nuthin'!

LYNDA
Melvin, you're an asshole ---

MELVIN
Don't call me no asshole ---

LYNDA
Then what are you?! The first time we have a prayer of getting ahead, you go out and buy a big fancy car, a big, fancy boat ---

MELVIN
You can't take it easy on 'Easy Street.' (X)

LINDA
Huh? (X)

Melvin turns to Darcy.

MELVIN
(to Darcy)
You like this boat, Darcy?

DARCY
I do, Daddy.

MELVIN
You like that car?

DARCY
I love it, Daddy.

LYNDA
Cut it out, Melvin ---

MELVIN
I seen cars like that boil by on the way from Reno to Vegas when I was a little kid. I'd be cleanin' out the goddam tar heater while my father was layin' road for them to drive by on, and now I've got one!

LYNDA
You got me cryin', Melvin.

MELVIN
Don't make fun, Lynda.

CONTINUED

138 CONTINUED -- 2 138

LYNDA
We're poor, Melvin -- poor!

MELVIN
Lynda, we're on Easy Street. (X)

LYNDA
I'm on Easy Street! I won! (X)

Melvin climbs down from the boat. There is a terrible silence. It seems for the moment as if he might hit her. But he can't.

MELVIN
Lynda -- don't go ---

She puts Faron down, turns back to him.

LYNDA
Melvin, you are an asshole -- but I love you.

MELVIN
Now wait a minute ---

LYNDA
Aw, c'est la vie.

MELVIN
What does that mean?

LYNDA
It's French. I used to dream I'd be a French interpreter.

MELVIN
You don't speak French ---

LYNDA
I told you it was a dream.

She goes. Melvin watches emptily as Lynda climbs into the taxi with Faron. Darcy comes running out of the house.

DARCY
G'bye, Daddy. Will I see you?

MELVIN
You'll see me, honey.

Darcy chases out front and the taxi disappears with Darcy waving to Melvin through the rear window.

139 INT. HOUSE - SUNSET - MELVIN 139

shuffles through the back door, into the living room of "Easy Street" furniture. It is well battered now -- he slumps in a chair. (X)

CB RADIO
(from the boat outside)
'Hello there, Country Roads, small craft warning from Point Dume to the Mexican border, barometric pressure twenty-two point nine....'

139-A EXT. LOS ANGELES - FREEWAYS - NIGHT 139-A (X)

Zoom in on a milk truck.

139-B EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT - ROCKWOOD TRUCK 139-B (X)

pulling up to a curb, Melvin hustling out, juggling cartons of milk in a container, working two or three houses at once.

139-C ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN 139-C

leaving gallons of milk on tops of cars, in baby strollers, all the appointed places. Sweating, running, hustling.

139-D EXT. MRS. WORTH'S HOUSE - NIGHT 139-D (X)

Melvin rushing up with his delivery. From out of the darkness ---

MRS. WORTH
Is that you, Melvin?

Melvin stops.

MELVIN
Yes, ma'am.

She appears at the doorway in her bathrobe.

MRS. WORTH
I thought it was you.

MELVIN
Yes, ma'am, two quarts of Hy-line, a Garden Cottage and 25-pound laundry compound.

CONTINUED

139-D CONTINUED 139-D

MRS. WORTH
Sounds right, Melvin. Wouldn't you like a nice hot cup of coffee.

MELVIN
Oh I dunno, ma'am -- I got my whole route ahead of me.

MRS. WORTH
It's cold out, Melvin -- don't you want a cup of coffee?

Melvin looks back at his truck.

MRS. WORTH
A nice-hot-cup-of-coffee.

Melvin takes a deep breath.

MELVIN
Well, don't mind if I do, Mrs. Worth.

MRS. WORTH
Melva.

MELVIN
Melva.

139-E MELVIN 139-E

He brings her order inside.

MRS. WORTH
Melva -- Melvin -- get it?

Melvin smiles.

MELVIN
Yes, ma'am, I do.

She turns around.

MELVIN
I mean Melva.

She pours some coffee, sets it on the kitchen table.

MRS. WORTH
Cream?

CONTINUED

139-E CONTINUED 139-E

MELVIN
Yes, ma'am.

MRS. WORTH
Sugar?

He looks at her, her parted bathrobe.

MELVIN
Four.

She scoops them in. They sit down.

They drink in silence, Mrs. Worth watching Melvin.

MRS. WORTH
Why don't we take our coffee inside? Where it's warmer. Would that suit you, Melvin?

MELVIN
Suits me fine.

139-F MRS. WORTH 139-F

leads the way into a May Company living room. They sit.

MELVIN
(brightly)
Where's Mr. Worth today?

MRS. WORTH
He's working graveyard. He won't be home for an hour.

MELVIN
A tough shift, graveyard.

MRS. WORTH
He doesn't have any choice. Neither do I. If you know what I mean, Melvin.

MELVIN
Yes, ma'am, I do.

MRS. WORTH
Makes for a long night.

MELVIN
You bet.

139-F CONTINUED 139-F

MRS. WORTH
I thought you'd never come, Melvin.
I lay in bed waiting all night.
Then finally -- you came.

MELVIN
Yes, I did.

Melvin smiles.

MELVIN
You got any more coffee there, Melva?

MRS. WORTH
Do you want any more coffee, Melvin?

MELVIN
No, Melva, I don't.

MRS. WORTH
So what do you say, Melvin?

MELVIN
You know what I say, Melva?

MRS. WORTH
What?

MELVIN
Let's get to it.

Mrs. Worth takes off her robe. They sink to the living room floor.

139-G EXT. MRS. WORTH'S HOUSE - DAWN - MELVIN 139-G

rushing outside, buttoning pants, Mrs. Worth reaching the door with him.

MRS. WORTH
Don't forget tomorrow, Melvin. A quart of Lo-Fat and a pound of Nippy Cheddar.

MELVIN
Yes, ma'am!

He leaps into his truck, Mrs. Worth disappears inside. Melvin drives off:

139-H OMITTED 139-H

139-I EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY - ON MELVIN 139-I

hustling into a house with an order. Hustling out.

140 EXT. ROCKWOOD DAIRY - LOCKERS - DAY 140

Christmas lights strung around the lockers. Melvin unloading full cases of milk, tamping ice around them.

His movements are slower now, the enthusiasm is gone. Some ice won't chop for him. He leaves it in a block on top of the milk. It perches precariously.

141 INT. ROCKWOOD DAIRY - JIM DELGADO'S OFFICE - A CHRISTMAS TREE 141

on Jim's desk. Melvin looking through it at Jim.

JIM
After 'Easy Street,' you paid us a thousand dollars. Rather, your

CONTINUED

141 CONTINUED 141

JIM (Cont'd)
wife did. You still owed us twenty-four hundred. That's back to thirty-four now ---

MELVIN
No kiddin'?

JIM
I've got a note here for 3500 dollars -- plus another note for 2500 -- the balance you owe us on the truck ---

MELVIN
I told you about that truck!

JIM
On your uniforms, 250 dollars -- we'll take that out of next week's earnings -- a total of six thousand and fifty dollars -- Sign where the x's are ---

He passes some papers over to Melvin. Melvin reads them quietly. Bonnie enters and delivers some paperwork to Jim.

MELVIN
You got me paying a hundred and ninety-five dollars a week interest -- for God's sake -- I'll never catch up ---

JIM
It's up to you, Melvin.

Melvin blinks.

MELVIN
I got to get me another job.

JIM
Wherever you go, you'll be working for us.

Melvin bends his head over the paper.

JIM
Did you sell your boat?

MELVIN
I sold it.

CONTINUED

141 CONTINUED - 2 141

JIM
What about the Cadillac?

MELVIN
They took it.

JIM
That's right they did, didn't they? Well you just got to hustle a little more, kid ---

Bill looks up at the route map behind him.

JIM
We got Ralph over here in Artesia -- he could use a little help ---

MELVIN
My God, that's clear across the county -- I can't make it, Bill, the milk gets warm ---

JIM
Get up a little earlier.

MELVIN
I'm up at 2 now ---

JIM
(shakes his head sincerely)
Tough.

MELVIN
I used to collect in the afternoon. I don't even have time to get my money out of my customers. You got me running in circles ---

JIM
Planning's the name of the game. You got to organize your time, Melvin.

Bill waits. Now he holds out his hand, Melvin signs the papers which are well-crumpled. Hands them over.

MELVIN
(sags, tries to brighten)
'We'll keep plugging.'

142 LA HABRA - TIKI RESTAURANT 142

A Polynesian place, strobe-lite and palms and grass skirts. Christmas trees, a Christmas party.

Familiar faces from The Rockwood Dairy dancing up a storm, the music loud.

Melvin gets up, goes to a pay telephone. Dials, drops coins.

MELVIN
Lynda?

LYNDA
Hello, Melvin.

MELVIN
How're you doin'?

Lynda is back home in Anaheim with Mother. Darcy is there and(X) so is the dog "Tramp."

LYNDA
I'm doing okay. What do you want, Melvin.

MELVIN
I was calling about Christmas.

LYNDA
Oh yeah, Christmas.

MELVIN
What does Darcy want?

LYNDA
I'm getting her a Barbi. You can get her Ken.

Silence.

MELVIN
How about Faron? I was thinking about an airgun.

LYNDA
Faron's nine months old, Melvin.

CONTINUED

142 CONTINUED 142

Silence.

MELVIN
Lynda?

LYNDA
Yeah?

MELVIN
You still there?

LYNDA
I'm still here.

Silence. Jim Delgado approaches, waits impatiently as Melvin resumes his conversation. (X)

LYNDA
Melvin, tell you what -- you buy Darcy what you wanna buy her -- and I'll buy her what I wanna buy her -- okay?

MELVIN
I was hoping you'd say that.

LYNDA
Good-bye, Melvin.

MELVIN
Good-bye, Lynda.

Melvin hangs up slowly, turns to Jim. (X)

JIM (X)
You said you were a big Country and Western singer -- we built our entertainment around you -- Are you going to or aren't you, Melvin?

MELVIN
I'm sorry, Jim, I don't feel like singing tonight. (X)

JIM (X)
I knew you'd crap out.

MELVIN
Now wait a minute ---

CONTINUED

142 CONTINUED - 2 142

JIM (X)
Never mind, Ralph will whistle through his belly button.

Jim walks off. (X)

143 OMITTED 143

144 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN 144

seated in a corner by himself. One of the drivers comes over, Ralph.

RALPH
Gee, Mel, we heard you wasn't going to sing ---

MELVIN
New Year's maybe ---

RALPH
I told my wife you sang Country. She's crazy for Country.

MELVIN
I'm real sorry, Ralph. And tell your wife I'm sorry too, will you?

Another old-timer comes by, George, a veteran of the driver's locker room.

GEORGE
Delgado was saying how you was yellow --- (X)

MELVIN
Did he?

GEORGE
I said if Melvin don't want to sing, that's his right.

MELVIN
What'd he say?

GEORGE
It's not what he says, Melvin. It's what he don't say, y'know what I mean?

There is a sudden fanfare from the band.

145 ANOTHER ANGLE - THE STAGE 145

Jim Delgado at the microphone.. (X)

JIM (X)
Ol' Melvin Dummar promised us a song tonight -- but I'm afraid -- or am I thrilled? -- he's chickened out.

Mevlin stands up.

MELVIN
Who says?! I got a song! I got a song right here!

Applause and cheers as Melvin makes his way to the stage.

JIM (X)
I guess I had it wrong -- take it, Melvin.

Melvin moves out in front of the band.

MELVIN
These Japs here probably don't know 'Six Days On the Road.'
(turns to the band)
You know 'Six Days On the Road?'

They shake their heads.

MELVIN
Well this song I written is sung to 'Six Days On the Road.' And now I'm going to sing it.

He grabs a guitar from a startled Polynesian musician.

MELVIN
(sings)
Well I pulled out of Rockwood
Headed down the Santa Ana Freeway
I got my Divco wound up and
I guess it's running okay.

Well I know it's the middle of the night
But heck that's all right
'Cause I'm a milkman for Rockwood,
So everything's okay.

CONTINUED

145 CONTINUED 145

MELVIN (Cont'd)
(sings)
Well my truck's kind of old
And man it's awful slow
The temperature is hot and the oil
pressure is low
If I make it to my route tonight
Everything will be all right
Ten hours on the road -- I just hope I
Make it home by tonight.

146 ON THE AUDIENCE 146

They are getting with it, starting to clap in rhythm.

147 ON MELVIN 147

He looks toward Jim. (X)

MELVIN
(singing)
I know Jim Delgado will be checking (X)
my books today
'Cause a big milk bill he said I
have to pay
But that don't bother me tonight
'Cause I can dodge ol' Jim all right (X)
Twelve hours on the road I just hope
I make it home today.

Well it seems like the price of milk
gets higher every day --
But us poor milkmen don't get no
raise in pay ---

The guys boo along with their wives. Jim doesn't smile. (X)
Melvin smiles down at his friends, looks to them as he sings.
The crowd is really with him.

Melvin spots Bonnie down in the audience. She is smiling up at him worshipfully. He sings to her now.

MELVIN
(singing)
Well it seems like a week since I
left my house last night
You know I could have a lot of
women but somehow it don't seem right
Yeah I could find some to hold me tight
but I'd never make my deliveries all right
Fourteen hours on the road man I hope
I make it home today.

CONTINUED

147 CONTINUED 147

The place is absolutely quiet now, the people all on his side. Melvin sees Jim Delgado leave. He points at him. (X)

Melvin takes it real slow for a finish.

MELVIN
(singing)
Now I work like a dog trying to
collect my pay
But all my customers say -- can't
you come back some other day
Boy I just know that there's an
easier way
Twenty hours on the road I just know
I'm going to make it home today.

Dead silence, then applause and cheering erupts. Melvin is shy on the stage, his friends, Pete and Ralph and George rush

CONTINUED

147 CONTINUED - 2 147

over to him, lift him off the stage, the band strikes up -- Bonnie rushes to Melvin.

She throws her arms around him.

MELVIN
(all embarrassed)
Hey, that was nice. You married, Bonnie?

Bonnie steps away from Melvin, looks him in the eye.

BONNIE
No I'm not, Melvin Dummar. And neither are you any more.

Melvin waits.

BONNIE
So what do you say?

MELVIN
(shrugs)
Gee, I don't know, Bonnie.

BONNIE
I'll take care of you, Melvin -- til you get on your feet. I got my kid's child support money saved up --- (X)

MELVIN
You got kids, Bonnie --- ? (X)

BONNIE
I got two kids ---

MELVIN
Oh my Lord ---

BONNIE
Listen, Melvin, I got a cousin up in Utah -- lost his lease on a gas station -- we run it right we get a thousand a month clear -- I've been waiting for this moment -- and the moment is now -- so what do you say?!

Melvin hesitates.

BONNIE
Or don't you come swinging your dick around the cashier's office no more!

147 CONTINUED - 3 147

MELVIN
Bonnie? A Mormon girl -- swearing?!

BONNIE
Bet your ass!

Melvin looks over at Jim Delgado who is dancing with a Japanese hostess. Melvin shakes his head.

MELVIN
When do we leave?

BONNIE
Tonight.

148 EXT. SERVICE STATION - WILLARD, UTAH - DAY 148

Melvin's milk truck rolls in with a U-Haul behind it. The U-Haul is jammed with bedding, Melvin's "Easy Street" furniture, the Kimball French Provincial piano, a goat, a lamb, and some rabbits. Bonnie tumbles out with her two tow-headed kids.

Melvin leads the goat out, ties it to one of the gas pumps. He looks around, exhilarated by the new surroundings, the sense of a fresh start.

149 EXT. GAS STATION - LATE AFTERNOON 149

Melvin hustling around the pumps, handling two cars at once, flipping hoods, washing windows, collecting cash. Terry and Bonnie help out.

DRIVER
(smiling)
You're going to get a coronary running around like that.

MELVIN
Better than starving to death!

He grabs the man's cash, locks up the pumps now. The man drives off and Melvin trudges up to the house behind the station.

150 INT. MELVIN'S HOUSE - DAY 150

A pathetic place, the "Easy Street" furniture squeezed in on top of the Kimball piano. A television set drones away.

CONTINUED

150 CONTINUED 150

The telephone rings. Melvin and Bonnie look at each other. Bonnie grabs the phone.

BONNIE
(on phone)
I'm sorry, Mr. LaMar, Mr. Dummar is in Salt Lake today. Yessir, yessir, I understand -- yes, I'll give him the message.

She hangs up.

BONNIE
He's not going to make the gasoline delivery next week -- unless he has a check.

MELVIN
Well, we'll give him a check.

BONNIE
What check?

MELVIN
Well, I can't pump gas unless I give 'em a check, can I, honey?

BONNIE
But our check's no good, Melvin.

MELVIN
Easter weekend. Oughta pump a thousand gallons. Give 'em a check tomorrow, we'll have it covered by Monday.
(back to the TV)
Hey, look at this, ol' Howard Hughes died. That's too bad. (X)

151 ON THE TV - HUGHES NEWSREEL FOOTAGE 151 (X)

NEWSCASTER
'The reclusive billionaire expired at 1 p.m. this afternoon on a flight to Houston, Texas -- no direct heirs are known, and a search for a will has begun --- '

MELVIN
I told you about pickin' up that old wino in the desert ---

BONNIE
You told me, Melvin.

CONTINUED

151 CONTINUED 151

MELVIN
(staring down the TV)
Sure didn't look anything like that.

BONNIE
Well, why would he? Those pictures are 40 years old.

SHARON
(one of Bonnie's kids)
When are we going to eat, Ma?

BONNIE
In a minute, honey, in a minute.

Bonnie gets up and moves to the stove. The TV is droning on.

Melvin sniffs.

MELVIN
Chicken?

BONNIE
This time, don't tell me how Lynda's is better.

Melvin watches as the pictures of Hughes flash by, in an airplane, at the Hell's Angels premiere, flying around the world.

152 and 153 OMITTED 152 and 153

154 EXT. GAS STATION - DAY 154 (X)

Melvin hustling, pumping gas into a car, wiping windows. Takes cash, the car drives off.

Melvin calls through to the grease rack.

MELVIN
Hey, Terry -- I'll be inside.

Terry, a teen-age helper, rolls out from under a car.

TERRY
You going up to the house?

CONTINUED

154 CONTINUED 154

MELVIN
In the office. Got class at four o'clock.

TERRY
What class, Melvin?

MELVIN
Business Practices. Weber State -- four o'clock.

TERRY
Business?

Terry rolls back under the car.

155 thru 159 OMITTED 155 thru 159

160 INT. GAS STATION - DAY 160 (X)

Melvin, his back to the door, his nose buried in a textbook.

161 EXT. GAS STATION - DAY 161 (X)

Ventura, the crisp, three-piece-suited character we saw at the Desert Inn, appears at the door. He calls in to Terry.

VENTURA
Hey!

Terry rolls out.

TERRY
Yeah?

162 CLOSEUP - TERRY 162

looking up.

163 CLOSEUP - VENTURA 163

hesitating, checking out Terry's face.

VENTURA
Where's Melvin?

Terry points towards the office.

164 INT. OFFICE - DAY 164 (X)

Ventura walks in. Melvin has his head in his book. Ventura studies the back of Melvin's head.

VENTURA
Hello.

Melvin swivels around.

MELVIN
Yes sir?

165 CLOSEUP - MELVIN 165

All earnestness, his ready smile.

VENTURA
You got cigarettes?

MELVIN
Sure we got cigarettes. What kind of cigarettes you like?

VENTURA
Uh -- Camels.

MELVIN
Camels? We don't get much call for them -- that's a real cigarette. Nowadays they want brown ones or thin ones or long ones, lo-tar, no-tax -- lemme see --
(reaches into rack)
There you go.

Ventura hands him a dollar. Melvin goes to make change.

VENTURA
Say, if I was heading down to Las Vegas ---

MELVIN
Catch Interstate 15, take her right on through ---

Melvin hands him the change, sits back down to his books. Terry can be seen outside.

VENTURA
(watching Melvin)
I heard I could get 6 and 50, takes me over the line, and then head south ---

CONTINUED

165 CONTINUED 165

MELVIN
Sure, you could do that ---

Stays with his book.

VENTURA
(watching Melvin)
But I guess 15's my best bet,

A car horn honks outside, Melvin runs out.

VENTURA
So what do you think?

MELVIN
Give me a minute ---

VENTURA
Sure thing ---

Melvin runs to the pumps.

166 EXT. STATION - AT THE PUMPS - DAY - MELVIN 166 (X)

servicing another car. Looks over, sees Terry rolling down the door to the grease rack. They wave good night.

167 ANOTHER ANGLE 167

Melvin walking back to the office.

168 MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW 168

Sees Ventura leaving the office.

169 INT. GAS STATION - DAY 169 (X)

Melvin ringing up the cash. Sits down to his books again.

170 CLOSEUP - BOOK 170

Stuck in the binding of the page Melvin is studying, is an envelope.

171 CLOSEUP - MELVIN 171

puzzled, looks at the envelope, now looks out the window of the office. Ventura is nowhere in sight.

172 CLOSEUP - ENVELOPE 172

In longhand, "Dear Mr. McKay, please see that this will is delivered after my death to Clark County Court House, Las Vegas, Nevada."

Signed "Howard R. Hughes."

173 ON MELVIN 173

turning the envelope over. And over.

174 EXT. STATION/INT. LIMOUSINE - DAY 174 (X)

Ventura jumping in the car.

DRIVER
Where to?

VENTURA
Airport.

The Driver hits the gas and they zoom out on to the Ogden/ Salt Lake Interstate. Ventura tosses the pack of cigarettes out the window.

175 EXT. GAS STATION - DAY - BONNIE'S POINT OF VIEW FROM HOUSE 175 (X)

Melvin climbing into his tow truck.

MELVIN
(calling up)
See you, honey, I'm off to class.
Mind the store.

176 EXT. UTAH HIGHWAY - DAY - CLOSEUP - MELVIN 176 (X)

bent over the wheel of the truck, speeding down the interstate, driving with wild concentration.

177 LONG SHOT - TRUCK 177

pulling off the road onto a knoll which overlooks the marshes leading to the Great Salt Lake. Melvin, a dot in the distance, climbing out of his truck, standing on top of the knoll, slowly raises his hands in the air.

A scream, paralyzing, explosive, rising up out of Melvin and shattering the countryside.

178 EXT. MORMON SQUARE - SALT LAKE CITY 178

Melvin hurrying past the Temple and the Tabernacle.

179 INT. CHURCH BUILDING/LOBBY/MC KAY'S OFFICE - DAY 179

Melvin delivers the envelope.

180 INT. MELVIN'S HOUSE - WILLARD - DAY - CLOSEUP - BONNIE 180

She drops a telephone receiver. Screams.

181 EXT. MELVIN'S GAS STATION - DAY 181

A van rolling up to it.

182 ON THE DOOR OF THE VAN 182

Emerging from it, a directional microphone, followed by four TV engineers in suede jackets, with porta-pak equipment, and a shag-hair-cutted newscaster, all heading straight for Bonnie who is bouncing up and down in front of the station.

183 EXT. MELVIN'S GAS STATION - DAY 183

New day. The place is swarming with TV vans, cars, reporters, minicameras.

WALTER CRONKITE (v.o.)
'A 31-year-old gasoline station attendant from Willard, Utah, was made a beneficiary of the purported will. His share is estimated at 156 million dollars -- The will, discovered yesterday at the World Headquarters of the Mormon Church --- '

CONTINUED

184 EXT. MELVIN'S HOUSE 184

Melvin, unseen, is crouched on the brow of the hill, watching the circus below.

185 ON THE HILL - MELVIN 185

circling around behind the crowd.

186 OMITTED 186

186-A MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW - TV CAMERAS 186-A

closing in on the station, interviewing Bonnie, her eldest child, Sharon. Roger Dutson is there. (X)

TERRY
I just heard Bonnie come screaming out of the pay phone -- it was Chuck Henry from ABC News in Los Angeles....

SHARON
(with another reporter)
Well, I guess I don't have to sell night crawlers anymore....

187 thru 190 OMITTED 187 thru 190

191 INT. MELVIN'S LIVING ROOM - WILLARD - NIGHT 191

Melvin sitting surrounded by his relatives -- his father, his mother, his six brothers and two sisters, and Fred Smith. (X) Also present are Dutson (Melvin's lawyer) and Bishop Poole. (X)

MELVIN
Gee, it's nice to meet you again, Fred -- I haven't seen you since I met you at your mom's wedding -- When was that, two years ago?

FRED
First thing, Melvin, is a press conference ---

MELVIN
No press conference, Fred, please.

192 EXT. MELVIN'S GAS STATION - DAY 192

The next day. On the hill behind Melvin's gas station is a sea of reporters and TV cameras. Fred Smith is lecturing them. Melvin's family is there along with Roger Dutson.

FRED
There'll be no litigation questions -- questions only on the basis of the will -- no litigation questions ---

193 MELVIN AND BONNIE 193

standing on the summit of the hill, Melvin in his best cowboy roses shirt.

REPORTER
Mr. Dummar, the relatives of Howard Hughes claim this will is a forgery ---

Fred Smith puts his hand over the lens of the Reporter's camera.

A scuffle, then Fred pulls the second plug. A suspicious man is noticeable among the onlookers.

194 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN IN THE PRESS CONFERENCE 194

MELVIN
He was just an ol' wino -- asked me for some money -- I give him a quarter -- I told him I once applied for a job at Hughes Aircraft -- He told me he owned Hughes Aircraft ---

195 ANOTHER ANGLE 195

REPORTER
Melvin, did you ever believe a dream like this could come true?

MELVIN
In the dream, there's no hassle.

196 thru 198 OMITTED 196 thru 198

199 INT. MELVIN'S GAS STATION OFFICE - DAY 199

Later -- a TV screen.

JIM DELGADO
'He may be getting 156 million

CONTINUED

199 CONTINUED 199

JIM DELGADO (Cont'd) (X)
dollars -- I'd just like to see the 4500 that he owes our dairy -- of course, I wish him good luck and everything.'

200 EXT. MELVIN'S GAS STATION - DAY 200 (X)

Vans pulling away, cars pulling away, reporters vanishing.

Melvin pumping gas again, comes around to collect money from a Driver. He's the same suspicious individual seen earlier in the crowd. (X)

MELVIN
That'll be four-fifty.

The door opens slightly. The Driver pulls a gun.

DRIVER
You remember me, Melvin? I was with you. We were all together.

CONTINUED

200 CONTINUED 200

DRIVER (Cont'd.)
You and me and Howard. But it was me that give him the quarter!

Melvin slams the door on the Driver's arm, the gun fires and shatters the car window, Melvin wrestles the Driver from the car, pinning him to the ground. Terry and Bonnie jump into the scuffle. (X)

201 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN 201

watching as the Box Elder Sheriff's car drives away with the Driver, handcuffed in back.

202 AT HOME - MELVIN AND BONNIE 202

A stack of mail, Bonnie is reading to Melvin, Melvin is watching "Gunsmoke."

BONNIE
(reading)
'...Some of the money will pay for me to help my parents, some pay debts --- '

MELVIN
Let's go on to the next.

BONNIE
'Dear Mr. Dummar -- I have my own wealth so I do not want a thing --- '

MELVIN
Haven't we heard that one?

BONNIE
'Dear Mr. Dummar --- '

MELVIN
Skip to the end, okay?

BONNIE
'P.S. Do not give away the money until you have settled all your tax obligations to Uncle Sam. Remember Joe Louis.'

Melvin yawns.

CONTINUED

202 CONTINUED 202

MELVIN
I think that's enough for tonight, Bonnie.

He gets up.

BONNIE
Where you going?

MELVIN
To bed.

BONNIE
You're going to bed so early?

MELVIN
I'm opening at six tomorrow.

BONNIE
At six?!

MELVIN
I was talking to this guy from the highway department -- he said they may jog the new freeway by here -- Labor Day, we'll never see another car ---

BONNIE
By Labor Day, you'll be a millionaire.

Melvin smiles.

MELVIN
Turn out the lights when you go to bed, will you, honey?

203 EXT. RESIDENTIAL AREA - CALIFORNIA - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING SHOT 203

Lynda and her new husband Bob's house. The lights are out in most houses. (X)

204 INT. LYNDA'S HOUSE - NIGHT 204

Lynda asleep next to her new husband Bob.

The telephone rings with a chime. Lynda wakes up, picks up the phone.

CONTINUED

204 CONTINUED 204

LYNDA
(into phone)
Hello? Who's that? Is that you, Melvin?

205 INT. MELVIN'S GAS STATION - NIGHT 205

Melvin is seated in the darkened office of the gas station, phone in hand.

MELVIN
(into phone)
Yeah, it's me.

Intercut:

LYNDA
God, Melvin, what happened?

MELVIN
I dunno. I guess that old wino really was Howard Hughes.

Silence.

LYNDA
Are you all right, Melvin?

MELVIN
Yeah, I'm all right. How's Darcy?

LYNDA
She's real proud.

Silence.

MELVIN
Don't let any of the kids at school make fun or anything.

LINDA
Don't worry, Melvin. Melvin?

MELVIN
Yeah?

LYNDA
Melvin, I'm sorry I didn't believe you.

MELVIN
Aw, Lynda, that's okay.

205 CONTINUED 205

LYNDA
Melvin?

MELVIN
Yeah?

LYNDA
Why did you call me?

MELVIN
I dunno...I better go now. Good-bye, Lynda.

LYNDA
G'bye, Melvin.

Bob, who has not stirred, moves as Lynda hangs up the phone.

BOB
(drowsy)
What was that?

LYNDA
Nothing....

Bob rolls over. Lynda lies there staring at the phone.

206 EXT. CLARK COUNTY COURTHOUSE - DAY - ESTABLISH 206
(X)

207 INT. CLARK COUNTY COURTROOM - LAS VEGAS - DAY - MELVIN 207
(X)

seated in the modern witness chair. A spotlight set in a cave in the ceiling. The cave comes down to meet the witness chair -- it gives the feeling the witness might be sucked up into it.

208 COURTROOM - SPECTATORS 208

The gallery filled, up front is Melvin's family, sisters, brothers, mother and father. On another bench, Lynda with Faron and Darcy. Beside them, Bonnie with her children. Other spectators, Lucy from Reno, Little Red, Mrs. Worth, Tina from the Cottonwood Ranch and Fred Smith. (X)

209 ON THE BENCH 209

Judge Hayes, a short, unhealthy-looking young man. He bends down towards Melvin.

JUDGE HAYES
Melvin, turn your chair around and face me.

Melvin turns his chair around.

JUDGE HAYES
Are you lying, Melvin?

MELVIN
No, sir.

JUDGE HAYES
Melvin, I want you to know there is a still, small voice that many people are blessed with that tells them when the truth is being spoken. It has been said, 'What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world yet lose his own soul?' If you are lying, Melvin, which you are, in my opinion, your soul may be in jeopardy, but I am not concerned about your soul, Melvin, right now I am concerned about your hide, because if I find that you are lying before this Court, I will make it a special duty to have a piece of your hide. I will direct that the district attorney bring a criminal prosecution against you and I will make it my special project that if you are convicted I will recommend that you do prison time. And I want you to know Nevada State Prison is no country club like the Gabbs local jail or wherever you have served time. If you're lying,

CONTINUED

209 CONTINUED 209

JUDGE HAYES (Cont'd)
you're going straight to Nevada State Prison. All right, Melvin?

MELVIN
You bet, Your Honor.

JUDGE HAYES
Brother Dunmar, I want the truth. Where did that will come from?

MELVIN
A man brought it to the station.

JUDGE HAYES
You persist in the answers that were elicted from you this morning?

MELVIN
I do, Your Honor.

JUDGE HAYES
Do you know who wrote the will?

MELVIN
I do not know.

JUDGE HAYES
Did you in any way participate in the preparation of that will?

MELVIN
No, I did not.

JUDGE HAYES
Do you know of anyone else who participated in the preparation of that will?

MELVIN
No, I don't.

The Judge looks down at the battery of lawyers. He sighs.

JUDGE HAYES
Gentlemen, I've done my best.

210 CORRIDOR - COURT HOUSE 210

Melvin surrounded by his relatives and Bonnie and Lynda and

CONTINUED

210 CONTINUED 210

the children. Syvella, his sister, holds up a sign "We're with you, Melvin!"

The court bell rings, everybody hustles back, Melvin finds himself standing for a moment with Lynda and Darcy and Faron.

LYNDA
You're doin' good.

MELVIN
You think so?

LYNDA
Real good.

Lynda hesitates.

LYNDA
Bob ---

MELVIN
Who's he?

LYNDA
My husband wishes you luck.

MELVIN
Well, you thank him.

The bells rings again. Melvin picks up Faron.

MELVIN
(to Darcy)
You hold on to Faron, honey. Give your mama a rest.

Darcy takes Faron.

LYNDA
What happens now?

MELVIN
I got to face the meanest lawyer in the whole damn world.

213 ON MELVIN AND MAXWELL 213

MAXWELL
Why did you take the will to the church?

MELVIN
Because I was too afraid to take it anywhere else.

MAXWELL
Say that again.

Melvin hesitates.

MELVIN
I thought they would help me.

MAXWELL
Mr. Dummar, you believe, do you not, that if in the name of God, you lie, God will hear you and you will incur his wrath. You believe that don't you, Mr. Dummar?

MELVIN
Yes, I do.

Suddenly Maxwell darts across the room, snatches up from the counsel desk a weather-beaten Bible.

MAXWELL
Mr. Dummar, I have a Bible here. Please stand up.

Melvin stands.

MAXWELL
Put your hand on it, raise your right hand.

CONTINUED

211 INT. COURTROOM 211

Harvey Maxwell, an urbane five-foot seven-inch man from Los Angeles, is examining Melvin.

MAXWELL
How did you open the envelope?

MELVIN
Steamed it open.

MAXWELL
Why didn't you take a knife or a letter opener and open it the way everybody else opens an envelope?

MELVIN
I was scared.

MAXWELL
What were you scared of?

MELVIN
That it might actually be true.

MAXWELL
Why was that frightening?

MELVIN
I don't know.

MAXWELL
Had you ever performed this little act before of steaming open an envelope?

MELVIN
Yes.

MAXWELL
What were the occasions for this activity?

MELVIN
Looking at letters that my ex-wife had written to her boyfriend and what have you, before she could mail them.

212 LYNDA 212

She smiles at Melvin reassuringly. Syvella raises the sign.

213 CONTINUED 213

Melvin raises his hand.

MAXWELL
Do you swear before God that this story about how that will was left to you is the truth?

MELVIN
I do.

MAXWELL
All right, sit down.

Melvin sits.

MAXWELL
That's all for now. Mr. Frost?

Frost, a Los Angeles lawyer for Hughes' relatives, heads straight for Melvin.

FROST
Can you give me one reason on earth why this strange man would have left that will with you, Melvin Dummar?

MELVIN
No, I don't. I've been wondering that myself.

FROST
Did you come up with an answer?

MELVIN
No, I haven't.

FROST
Melvin, isn't it true you can't come up with an answer because it never happened that way?

MELVIN
That is the way it happened.

FROST
Well, Melvin, if it meant eternal damnation in hell would you just say it still happened that way?

MELVIN
Yes, I would.

213 CONTINUED - 2 213

FROST (X)
Melvin, you know, don't you, that perhaps other than your relatives, there is nobody in this courtroom who believes you. You know that, don't you?

MELVIN
I don't know what people believe. And I don't care. People have been calling me an asshole all my life. And it don't matter either way.

The courtroom erupts, Judge Hayes slams his gavel.

Melvin leans back. Darcy waves. Melvin waves back.

FROST (X)
Let's go back to when you got the will, and everybody celebrated and you were a national hero, Melvin. And they asked you about your getting over a hundred million dollars and I think you sobbed, choked, went into a sort of deep, heavy mood. I was kind of caught by it as I watched it on TV, but then my wife said, 'My God, it is just like the women on the game shows!' I don't watch the game shows myself, but soon after I learned you had gotten your wife on one.

Melvin looks at Lynda. She waves.

FROST (X)
Let's go through the Golden Gate together, Melvin. Tell us the real truth. I know the dream is so much better -- My God, I was a child in Minnesota during the Depression and I can remember, kind of hoping one of those trucks going by might have a box of chewing gum on it and it would fall off. That was the dream -- it never happened. And I never tried to make it happen.

Frost takes a deep breath. (X)

CONTINUED

213 CONTINUED - 3 213

FROST
Let's make a deal, Melvin. Tell us the truth and you know what I'll give you -- I'll plead in your behalf a whole day to have the judge give you probation. But if you don't tell the truth, I'll do my utmost to see you never breathe another free breath in the state of Nevada.

Silence.

JUDGE HAYES
Mr. Dummar, do you wish to make any response to what I would characterize as an offer from Mr. Frost?

MELVIN
I would like to say I don't know if the will is a forgery or not. If it is, I didn't do it. And if it isn't --
(shrugs)
I guess it's for real.

FROST
That's no deal, Melvin.

MELVIN
I know that.

FROST
And I'm sorry.

MELVIN
Yes, sir.

Frost stalks back to the counsel table. He is exhausted. Pilbrow, another lawyer, rises unsteadily. Looks at Melvin.

214 PILBROW'S POINT OF VIEW - MELVIN 214

Fresh as a daisy, his head tucked into his neck, he is snapping his fingers, trying to get a rise out of Faron.

215 MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW - LYNDA 215

raises Faron's hand with hers, waves to Melvin.

216 INT. MELVIN'S HOTEL ROOM - LAS VEGAS - DAY 216 (X)

Melvin is packing, Roger Dutson, Melvin's lawyer enters, a broad smile on his face.

Melvin looks up.

ROGER
You did it, Melvin. The Judge set a trial for July 6 ---

MELVIN
What does that mean?

ROGER
That means he believes you. On July 6th, they're going to determine the validity of the will. Like he said, 'It's the only will we've got,' plus the positive testimony by the handwriting experts. I think the will is going to be admitted to probate. You're going to get your inheritance.

MELVIN
You think so?

ROGER
Of course it's going to be a long, long road -- but we've won the first battle. I can tell -- the T-shirt people called again -- Rockwood Dairy says they'll lift the garnishees on your entire earnings at the filling station ---

MELVIN
Really?

ROGER
The T-shirts are an easy fifteen thousand. What do you say?

MELVIN
No, thanks ---

ROGER
But you can use the cash ---

CONTINUED

216 CONTINUFD 216

MELVIN
You want to get paid?

ROGER
No no no -- it's just they started paving the freeway today down from the gas station -- within two weeks you're going to be pretty lonely up there.

MELVIN
Don't worry about me.

Roger sighs.

ROGER
Well, you won, Mel ---

MELVIN
Then what are you so sad about?

ROGER
I just hope you don't have any illusions. They'll fight it through every court they can -- the relatives -- Summa -- meanwhile the government'll be taking out taxes -- the states'll be taking out taxes -- the lawyers'll be taking out legal fees -- the money's going to be siphoned off ---

MELVIN
I knew all that the day I found the will.

ROGER
You're kidding.

MELVIN
Melvin Dummar's never going to see 156 million dollars -- in fact he's never going to see a dime.

Melvin closes his suitcase: puts it on a cart and pushes it out the door.

MELVIN
But Howard Hughes sang Melvin Dummar's song. Howard Hughes sang 'Santa's Souped Up Sleigh.'

CONTINUFD

216 CONTINUED -- 2 216

The door slams.

ROGER
(bewildered)
'Santa's' what, Melvin?

Melvin has gone.

217 EXT. CLARK COUNTY COURTHOUSE - DAY 217 (X)

Melvin rolls up in Little Red's old car. Lynda is standing on the sidewalk with Faron and Darcy.

MELVIN
Sorry ---

LYNDA
It's okay. Gave me a chance to get them fed. You really want to do this?

MELVIN
See my kids? Get them out of that smog? You kiddin'?

Lynda looks at the car doubtfully.

MELVIN
Little Red lent it to me for the trip. He went back up with Bonnie in the tow truck.
(to Darcy)
Hop in, kids. There's Lifesavers and comic books back there.

Darcy pushes Faron into the back seat.

MELVIN
I bought a pair of shoes for Faron -- help him try them on, Sister.

Darcy takes Faron's shoes off.

MELVIN
You got money to get back to L.A.?

LYNDA
Don't worry about me, Melvin.

CONTINUED

MELVIN
(smiles)
It's in my blood.

LYNDA
You're not going to hassle me when I want them back end of the summer?

MELVIN
You've got my word.

LYNDA
That's what I'm afraid of.

MELVIN
Howsa bout you takin' me back the end of the summer?

Lynda smiles.

LYNDA
You're married, Melvin.

Melvin shrugs.

MELVIN
So are you.

Lynda smiles again.

LYNDA
I do miss it sometimes, Melvin -- it was always exciting. Lousy -- but exciting.

MELVIN
We could make it that way again.

LYNDA
It is now.

Lynda smiles once more.

LYNDA
Give us a kiss.

She kisses him hard. He blushes.

MELVIN
End of the summer?

CONTINUED

217 CONTINUED - 2 217

LYNDA
Maybe.

Now he piles into the car.

LYNDA
(yelling)
G'bye, kids!

But Darcy is reading a comic book out loud to Faron. They don't even look up.

218 EXT. TONOPAH HIGHWAY - LATE AFTERNOON 218 (X)

Melvin rolling along in Little Red's car, Darcy and Faron have moved into the front seat, sound asleep.

Melvin rests his hand on Darcy's forehead.

219 ON MELVIN THROUGH WINDSHIELD 219

Windshield, a raindrop, then another. Then a sudden downpour, a desert shower, stopping almost as soon as it starts.

220 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW 220

The rain clearing, just a gray sky. He opens the window. Howard opens his window. They're in Little Red's car. (X)

221 ON MELVIN 221

breathing in the desert after the shower.

MELVIN
Greasewood.

HOWARD
(breathing in)
Sage.

MELVIN
Nothing like the smell of the desert after the rain.

HOWARD
Greasewood and sage.

CONTINUED

221 CONTINUED 221

They roll along for a while.

HOWARD
How about letting me drive?

MELVIN
You?

HOWARD
Just for a little while.

MELVIN
Drive?

HOWARD
I'm a goddamn good driver ---

MELVIN
You haven't driven a car since they put out the last Hudson.

HOWARD
I'm a goddamn good driver. I'll bet you.

222 ON MELVIN 222

He looks at Howard.

223 ON HOWARD 223

waiting.

224 ON MELVIN 224

Smiles, pulls off the road.

MELVIN
When we get to Vegas, I'll run her into town.

Howard hesitates.

MELVIN
Take the wheel, ol' timer.

Howard gets out and Melvin slides over.

225 MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW 225

Howard looking carefully at the dashboard. Very slowly he puts the car into gear, very slowly he releases the brake, and very slowly he rolls it out onto the road.

226 ON MELVIN AND HOWARD 226

Melvin watching as Howard drives. Howard watching Melvin watching him. Now Melvin's head begins to nod. His eyes close.

227 ON HOWARD 227

Driving. now he turns, sneaks a look at Melvin who is sound asleep beside him. Gives the car a little gas and begins to sing.

HOWARD
(singing; quietly)
'Make my bed
And light the light
I'll arrive
Late tonight
Blackbird!
Blackbird!
Bye! Bye!'

Howard props his arm out the window, adjusts the mirror, now he gives the car more gas.

He is very happy.

228 MELVIN'S CAR 228

rolling down the highway to Las Vegas. From it ---

HOWARD (v.o.)
(singing)
'Pack up all my cares and woes
Singin' low
Here I go
Bye bye blackbird....'

The car becomes a dot. It never disappears, nor does the music end.

FADE OUT

THE END