

VACATION

by

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based on characters created by John Hughes

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Current revisions by

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FADE IN:

EXT. SKY - AERIAL SHOTS - DAY

of the Chicago skyline. We PICK UP a short-haul regional JET as it descends.

RUSTY (V.O.)
Well, folks, this is Captain
Griswold. We're on our final
approach into Chicago's Midway
Airport. We hope you enjoyed your
eighteen minute flight from South
Bend.

INT. AIRPLANE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

We MOVE UP the aisle of the cramped aircraft, PASSING
mainly BUSINESS TRAVELERS.

RUSTY (V.O.)
We know you have many options when
choosing an airline for your North
Indiana-South Illinois travel
needs, so we'd like to thank you
for flying Econo Air.

INT. COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS ACTION

We see RUSTY GRISWOLD, early 40s, eternally optimistic,
wearing a pilot uniform. He sits beside his co-pilot,
HARRY, 70s, fast asleep.

RUSTY
(over intercom)
Because at Econo Air we try our
best to do our best.

He turns off the intercom.

RUSTY
Harry, you want to lower the gear?

Harry snores softly. Rusty chuckles.

RUSTY
Never mind, I got it.

INT. MIDWAY AIRPORT - SHORT TIME LATER

Rusty exits the gangway from his aircraft and heads into
the terminal.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He walks past the UNITED AIRLINES CREW LOUNGE just as the door opens and a TALL, HANDSOME PILOT exits with a BEAUTIFUL FEMALE FLIGHT ATTENDANT.

HANDSOME PILOT
I've got a 48-hour layover in
Barcelona tomorrow if you care to
join...

The flight attendant giggles flirtatiously. In the lounge behind them, Rusty can make out other glamorous-looking PILOTS and FLIGHT ATTENDANTS mingling and laughing among elegant wood and leather surroundings.

He continues down the corridor, arriving at a door labeled "ECONO AIR CREW LOUNGE."

INT. ECONO AIR CREW LOUNGE - MOMENTS LATER

In contrast to the United Airlines Lounge, this place is more like an inner-city YMCA locker room. Rusty stands at a locker as he changes out of his uniform beside a FAT, NAKED MAN who towels off in the b.g. Throughout the scene, the fat man has a persistent, phlegmy cough.

Rusty seems unfazed, whistling as he changes. We see the door of his locker is covered in family photos showing his WIFE and two YOUNG SONS.

INT. RUSTY'S CAR - SHORT TIME LATER

Rusty sits in bumper-to-bumper rush hour Chicago traffic. He notices that the clock has just flipped to 5:00 PM. As he does every day at this time, he turns on a lame "zoo crew" type show on the radio.

We hear C+C Music Factory's "Everybody Dance Now" kick in.

ZOO CREW GUY #1 (V.O.)
(on radio)
It's 63 degrees in Chi-town and
you've got Weirdo and Tom coming
at you!

ZOO CREW GUY #2 (V.O.)
(on radio)
Buckle your seatbelts, folks,
'cause it's about to get bumpy up
in here.

SFX: a SCREECHING CAT

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ZOO CREW GUY #1 (V.O.)
 (on radio)
 Ooh, kitty likes to scratch.

Rusty chuckles, enjoying these guys way more than most people would.

RUSTY
 (to himself)
 Kitty likes to scratch.

EXT. GRISWOLDS' HOUSE - LATER

Rusty's car pulls into the driveway of a suburban house. He exits his car and heads inside.

INT. GRISWOLDS' FOYER - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Rusty enters.

RUSTY
 Hello? I'm home!

JAMES, 14, Rusty's slightly geeky, overly sensitive son, hurries in, distraught. He's carrying an acoustic guitar.

RUSTY
 Hey, pal. What's the matter?

JAMES
 Look what Kevin did to my guitar!

He turns it to show the words "I HAVE A VAGINA" scrawled in magic marker on the guitar.

RUSTY
 That's not very nice. Or accurate.

JAMES
 He's always picking on me. Why is he such a sociopath?

RUSTY
 (calling off)
 Kevin! Come in here.

10-YEAR-OLD KEVIN enters looking defiant and wearing his favorite "Affliction" T-shirt. He's a born jock and a bully, despite being a foot shorter than his older brother.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEVIN

Seriously? You told on me? You have such a vagina!

JAMES

Dad!

RUSTY

That's enough. Kevin, you know only girls have vaginas.

KEVIN

Exactly.

RUSTY

Okay, then. Now apologize to him.

KEVIN

You mean to 'her'?

JAMES

Dad!

RUSTY

Kevin. You know we only use the pronoun 'her' with girls.

KEVIN

Exactly.

RUSTY

Okay. Is everybody good now?

KEVIN

I guess so.

JAMES

What?! He didn't even apologize! And what about my guitar?! This is a Gibson Hummingbird!

Kevin snorts.

RUSTY

(to Kevin)

Here, give me that marker.

Kevin hands Rusty the marker. Rusty CROSSES OFF part of the message and writes something else.

RUSTY

See? Problem solved. Dad to the rescue. Now, get washed up. The Petersons are coming over for dinner.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES

But, Dad --

Rusty and Kevin head off. James looks miserably at his guitar which now reads "I HAVE A PENIS."

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Rusty enters to find his wife, DEBBIE, 30s, pretty, patient but strong-willed, making something at the counter.

RUSTY

(giving her a kiss)
Hey, babe. Whatcha making?

DEBBIE

It's a curried fennel raisin slaw from Morocco. It's new.

RUSTY

What about your coleslaw? From America. Everybody loves that.

DEBBIE

We always have that. I thought it'd be nice to try something different for once. Spice things up a little. Here, try.

She holds out a spoon of nasty, goopy salad.

RUSTY

Oh, uh --

She feeds him the slaw. He pretends to chew and swallow.

DEBBIE

What do you think?

RUSTY

Mmm.

DEBBIE

Really? You like it?

RUSTY

Mmm-hmm.

DEBBIE

Is it still in your mouth?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

(no)
Mmm-mmm.

Rusty quickly heads out. Debbie looks a little miffed.

INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Russ and Debbie sit at the table with their neighbors, NANCY and JACK PETERSON, 40s. James sits beside SHEILA PETERSON, 13. Kevin is between James and GARY PETERSON, 11.

ANGLE ON JAMES AND SHEILA

She's kind of cute. She looks over and smiles at him. James, who is helplessly shy around girls, smiles back weakly. She goes back to her meal. We can tell James wants to make conversation with her but he's too nervous, so he just continues to stare at her.

SHEILA

(noticing)
Why are you staring at me?

JAMES

(looking away)
Sorry.

She frowns and turns away from him.

JAMES

Sorry.

Kevin has been watching this with amusement. He leans in to his brother.

KEVIN

(sotto)
Smooth.

He punches James in the stomach.

JAMES

(doubling over)
Ungh!

Kevin cackles.

RUSTY

Kevin, James. No fighting at the table.

ANGLE ON RUSTY AND JACK

JACK PETERSON

I'm telling you, Russ, this Xbox isn't like the videogames we had as kids. These things are so immersive.

RUSTY

Sounds cool.

JACK PETERSON

It's more than cool. It's killer.
(calling to Gary)
G-man! Get over here.

Gary trots over and Jack puts him in a playful headlock, tickling him. Gary loves it.

JACK PETERSON

Tell Mr. Griswold how epic we are at *Modern Warfare*.

GARY

Our clan is number one on the Chicago leaderboard. I'm good at melee and Dad's good at sniping.

RUSTY

Wow. A clan. Sounds epic. And you guys always play together?

JACK PETERSON

Every night after homework and toothbrushing --
(grabbing Gary)
Get over here!

He tickles Gary again. Rusty looks down the table at his boys and has a thought.

RUSTY

Kevin! James! Come here.

KEVIN

(not moving)
I'm eating.

James gets up and heads over.

JACK PETERSON

I've always wanted to ask you, Russ. Why'd you name your kids Kevin and James? Are you guys big fans of the heavysset actor?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

No. Kevin was born right before
'King of Queens' took off. It was
just bad timing.

JACK PETERSON

Or good timing. Nancy and I loved
'Hitch.'

James arrives. Rusty immediately grabs him in a headlock
and tries to tickle him.

JAMES

(shrill and pained)
Ow! OW! Stop it!
(as Rusty lets him
go)
Why did you do that?!

Jack looks down at this plate, uncomfortable.

RUSTY

Sorry, pal. I was just goofing
around. Listen, what do you think
about us getting an Xbox and
playing some *Modern Warfare*
together?

JAMES

I'm not into first-person
shooters, Dad.

RUSTY

You sure? 'Cause it could be...
epic.

JAMES

(unenthused)
Um, maybe.

RUSTY

(tussling his hair)
That's my G-man!

James returns to his seat. Gary and Jack are looking at
Rusty quizzically.

JACK PETERSON

Did you just steal my son's
nickname?

RUSTY

(after a beat)
Can I get you another soda?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK PETERSON

Thanks.

Rusty exits to the kitchen.

NANCY PETERSON

You look terrific, Deb. Have you lost weight?

DEBBIE

Oh, thanks. Yeah, I actually have lost a couple pounds. I'm going to need to have my wedding ring resized.

She slides her ring easily up and down her finger.

NANCY PETERSON

God, I probably couldn't take my ring off my fat finger if I tried. I ate so much in Paris last week.

DEBBIE

You were in Paris?!

NANCY PETERSON

Every year we leave the kids at my mom's and Jack takes me somewhere exotic. It really gets us out of our rut.

Nancy takes a bite of Debbie's fennel slaw.

DEBBIE

I'm so jealous. Rusty's taken us on the same vacation for the last ten years: a rental cabin in Cheboygan, Michigan.

Nancy nods as she discreetly spits out the slaw into her napkin.

KEVIN

You mean Che-borinq, Michigan.

JAMES

It's like Dante's purgatory, only with mosquitos.

James glances at Sheila to see if she's impressed by his allusion. She could care less.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEBBIE

(to Nancy)

It's not so much fun as it is...
routine.

(half-jokingly)

Kind of like marriage, right?

She gives Nancy a wry smile. Nancy nods back but clearly can't relate.

REVEAL that Rusty has been standing unnoticed in the doorway, holding a soda. He looks slightly pained.

INT. GRISWOLDS' BEDROOM - THAT NIGHT

Rusty is in bed flipping through a family photo album.

INSERT - PHOTO ALBUM

A series of TEN PHOTOS taken at the same spot in front of the same vacation cabin each year: The first shows Rusty, a pregnant Debbie, 3 year-old James and a PUPPY. In the next picture, Debbie holds baby Kevin, James is 4, the puppy is a grown dog and Rusty has a moustache. Then, Kevin is 2, James is 5, Rusty's moustache is gone. And so on: the exact same picture as everyone ages and Rusty's moustache comes and goes. Eventually, the dog disappears.

Something strikes Rusty and he flips back to the first photo again. EXTREME CLOSEUP on Debbie's face, smiling happily. As he flips through, though, her SMILE FADES in each consecutive photo until the most recent picture which shows her with dead eyes and NO SMILE AT ALL.

DEBBIE (O.S.)

Whatcha doing?

BACK TO SCENE

Debbie has entered.

RUSTY

Just strolling down memory lane.

Rusty picks up an older album and opens it on a photo of his teenage self standing with CLARK, DEBBIE and AUDREY smiling gleefully in front of the famous WALLEY WORLD roller-coaster: the WHIPPER SNAPPER. An idea strikes him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

What would you think about going somewhere different for vacation this year?

DEBBIE

You mean, not the cabin?

RUSTY

The cabin's starting to feel a little... routine.

DEBBIE

(playing it cool)
You think?

RUSTY

Yeah. A vacation is supposed to be exciting. A break from the ordinary.

DEBBIE

(getting excited)
The Petersons just got back from Paris. We could go there!

RUSTY

I have an even better idea.
(beat)
Walley World.

DEBBIE

Walley World? That's not exactly what I was --

RUSTY

This is just what our family needs. Some adventure.

DEBBIE

I don't think flying to Walley World is that big an adventure.

RUSTY

You're right.

Debbie looks relieved.

RUSTY

We need to drive there.

DEBBIE

Wait, what?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

The road trip we took to Walley World when I was a kid was the best vacation I ever had.

DEBBIE

Didn't your aunt and her dog die on that trip?

RUSTY

Well, yeah, but --

DEBBIE

And didn't you tell me your dad forced his way into the park and held a guard at gunpoint?

RUSTY

You're focusing on the bad stuff. What I remember is how much fun we had. Monument Valley. The Grand Canyon. Riding the Whipper Snapper. This is perfect. We can rent a car, drive out and fly back. What do you say, Deb?

Seeing how energized Rusty is about the plan, Debbie smiles a bit tightly and relents.

DEBBIE

What the heck. It can't be worse than Cheboygan.

RUSTY

(hugging her)
That's the spirit!
(then, suggestively)
We should celebrate.

DEBBIE

Yeah? Okay.

Rusty kisses her but just as Debbie starts to get into it, he breaks the kiss.

RUSTY

Wait. What am I doing? Let me get things ready.

He jumps off the bed and hurries to the dresser where he takes out a well-worn CD and pops it into the stereo.

DEBBIE

Honey, maybe we can do it without the --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MUSIC CUE: Sade's "Smooth Operator" begins to play. Debbie sighs. This is clearly a well-worn routine.

Rusty does an awkward strip-walk as he crosses back to the bed, his eyes locked to Debbie's. She maintains a stoic smile and begins to disrobe under the covers.

Rusty locks the bedroom door, then opens the drawer in the nightstand and holds up two Yankee jar candles.

RUSTY

("sexy")
'Berry Bramble' or 'Home for the
Holidays'?

DEBBIE

Uhh... 'Berry Bramble.'

RUSTY

(still "sexy")
You sure? Because "Home for the
Holidays" has a lot more wax left.
Maybe we should even them out so
we don't run out of one before the
other?

DEBBIE

Whichever.

Rusty winks at her as he lights the "Home for the Holidays" candle.

RUSTY

I'm going to make so much love to
you.

He slides under the covers and the last thing we see before he switches off the lamp is Debbie's resigned smile.

INT. KITCHEN - NEXT MORNING

James and Kevin sit at the breakfast table. James tries to read a paperback of Kerouac's *Dharma Bums* while Kevin repeatedly flicks FROOT LOOPS at him with his spoon.

JAMES

Cut it out!

KEVIN

(standing up)
Or what, bitch?

James sighs and goes back to his book.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEVIN
(sitting down)
That's what I thought, bitch.

He flicks another piece of cereal at him. Rusty and Debbie enter.

RUSTY
Guys, your mom and I have some exciting news.

KEVIN
James is dying?

DEBBIE
No! Why would that be exciting?

KEVIN
I'd be excited.

JAMES
What's the news, Dad?

RUSTY
Tomorrow, the four of us are driving... to Walley World!

JAMES
(thrilled)
For real?!

RUSTY
For real.

KEVIN
This is some bullshit!

DEBBIE
Kevin!

KEVIN
Well, it is. I don't want to be stuck in a car with you people. Plus, I'll miss the first week of wrestling practice.

RUSTY
So we'll find a wrestling range on the way.

KEVIN
That's not even a thing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES

I think this is a great idea, Dad.
 Heading out on the open road,
 discovering America. We'll be
 like Jack Kerouac and the Merry
 Pranksters!

Kevin punches James in the arm.

JAMES

Ow!

RUSTY

Kevin.

(then)

Now, you guys start packing. I'm
 gonna go rent us some wheels.

DEBBIE

Maybe get a mid-size since we're
 going to be in there so much.

RUSTY

Mid-size it is.

EXT. GRISWOLDS' DRIVEWAY - NEXT MORNING

It's early. Rusty and the tired-looking boys load up
 their rented CHRYSLER COLOSSUS, a hulking SUV that looks
 like something T-Pain would drive. Debbie regards it
 dubiously.

DEBBIE

This is a mid-size?

RUSTY

No, this is the Chrysler Colossus.
 It's a huge size. But you said
 yourself, we're gonna be spending
 a lot of time in here, so I
 thought it was worth the splurge.
 Look, it's got a GPS and a CB
 radio. The kids will be able to
 talk to truckers.

DEBBIE

Is that a good idea?

RUSTY

Sure. Truckers are the salt of
 the earth.

(as Kevin passes by)

Hey, Kev. Starting to get
 excited?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEVIN

No. I'm going to sleep.

He climbs into the backseat and throws the blanket over himself. James loads a bulky old typewriter into the back of the car.

DEBBIE

James, not the typewriter. We have to fly home, remember?

JAMES

But I want to keep a stream-of-consciousness travelogue.

RUSTY

That's great, pal, but can't you do that with a pen and paper?

JAMES

I guess I could use my dream journal or my wish diary...

RUSTY

Atta boy. Use one of those.

James heads inside with the typewriter. Debbie gives Rusty a concerned look.

RUSTY

Come on, every boy that age has a... wish diary.

INT. CAR - SHORT TIME LATER

Rusty is in the driver's seat. Debbie sits beside him. James is in back beside Kevin who is still covered in his blanket.

RUSTY

Okay, gang, seatbelts on, full tank of gas. Debbie, GPS check, please.

DEBBIE

Roger.

She pushes a button on the GPS screen.

GPS (V.O.)

Your destination is two thousand, five hundred, sixty miles ahead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES
(excited)
Westward, ho!

RUSTY
Walley World, here we come!

EXT. GRISWOLD HOME - CONTINUOUS ACTION

The SUV pulls out of the driveway as we SWOOP UP OVER the neighborhood and the city.

MUSIC CUE: "Holiday Road" (either the original by Lindsey Buckingham or an updated cover).

EXT. CHICAGO STREETS - DAY

The Colossus passes the Sears Tower and Wrigley Field. As the Griswolds wait to enter a highway on-ramp, a PRIUS pulls up beside them. Rusty smiles and nods down at the Granola-looking MAN in the Prius. He sneers back at the giant vehicle and gives Rusty the finger. Rusty's smile fades.

EXT. HIGHWAY - SHORT TIME LATER

The car cruises down the highway. Suddenly, the music is interrupted by a PINGING sound.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Rusty checks his gauges and notices a warning light blinking.

RUSTY
No way.

DEBBIE
What is it?

RUSTY
We're almost out of gas.

DEBBIE
But we've barely been driving an hour.

RUSTY
I guess the Colossus doesn't get great mileage.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEBBIE

You'd think a nine-ton box would.

RUSTY

It's fine. I'll just fill her up.

EXT. OFF RAMP - CONTINUOUS ACTION

The SUV exits the highway.

EXT. GAS STATION - MINUTES LATER

Rusty fills the car with gas as the dollars tick off higher and higher: \$60...\$65...\$70...

RUSTY

Looks like this is gonna take a while to fill if you guys want to go pee.

DEBBIE

You heard him, guys, let's go.

Debbie and James climb out of the car but Kevin doesn't move.

DEBBIE

Kevin, come on.

Still nothing. Debbie pulls down the blanket and gasps as she sees a DUFFLE BAG where her son should be.

DEBBIE

What the hell?!

EXT. GRISWOLD HOME - ONE HOUR LATER

The SUV pulls into the driveway. On the front lawn are a dozen 10 and 11-YEAR-OLDS having what appears to be a Mixed Martial Arts competition. There's a makeshift ring, inside which Kevin is beating the crap out of another SMALL BOY as his friends cheer him on.

KEVIN

(seeing the car)
Aw, shit.

Rusty rolls down his window.

RUSTY

You are in a lot of trouble, mister!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Kevin helps his battered opponent up, then slumps over to the car and gets in.

DEBBIE

What were you thinking? Do you know how worried we were?

KEVIN

Sorry.

RUSTY

Sorry's not gonna cut it, Kevin.

The car pulls out of the driveway.

SFX: PING

RUSTY

Great. Looks like we're going to have to fill her up again.

DEBBIE

(turning to Kevin)
You're grounded, buddy.

KEVIN

(hopeful)
Does that mean I get to stay home?

DEBBIE

No. You're grounded with us in the car. Or any hotels or scenic attractions we visit.

KEVIN

That's not grounded. That's just going on a road trip.

Debbie stares at him for a beat.

DEBBIE

You know what? Now you're double grounded.

KEVIN

Awww.

Kevin glances over to see James scribbling in his journal with a small smile on his face.

KEVIN

What are you smiling at?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES

Nothing. Just jotting down
some... observations.

Kevin glares at him for a beat, then grabs the journal
from him and throws it out the car window.

JAMES

My whimsy log!

EXT. CHICAGO STREETS - DAY

MUSIC CUE: "Holiday Road" starts up again as if nothing
happened.

Once more, the Griswolds pass the Sears Tower and Wrigley
Field.

EXT. HIGHWAY - LATER

The SUV crosses over the Mississippi River. A sign reads
"Welcome to Missouri, The Show Me State."

DEBBIE (V.O.)

Hey, is the University of Arkansas
on our way?

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS ACTION

RUSTY

More or less. Why?

DEBBIE

I'd like to stop and see my niece,
Heather. She was in a car
accident last month, and I want to
see how she's doing.

KEVIN

I don't remember her. Is she hot?

JAMES

(grossed out)
She's our cousin.

KEVIN

I know. Is she hot?

James shakes his head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES

Hey, Dad. How come we're going all the way to Walley World when Six Flags is so close?

RUSTY

Well, for one thing, Six Flags doesn't have the Whipper Snapper.

KEVIN

What the hell is that?

RUSTY

Oh, only the tallest, fastest roller coaster in the world.

JAMES

Actually, I think the tallest, fastest roller coaster is at Six Flags.

RUSTY

Well, not when I was a kid. When that thing took you up its first hill, you felt like you could reach out and grab yourself a chunk of sky.

JAMES

Sounds wonderful, Dad.

RUSTY

You guys are gonna love it.
(noticing in rearview mirror)
Hey, looks like we've got us a little ol' convoy.

They all look out the back window and see an 18-WHEELER with darkly tinted windows and a TEDDY BEAR strapped to its front grill.

RUSTY

Let's say hello.

He switches on the CB radio and grabs the microphone.

JAMES

Do you know how to use that thing, Dad?

RUSTY

Oh, it's easy. You've just gotta use their lingo. Watch.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY (CONT'D)

I'm going to ask if there are any police up ahead.

(then, into mic, with Western accent)

Yeah, breaker one-nine to Rubber Ducky, you got any smokey the bears in your kitchen, ten-four, over?

There's static. Then...

TRUCKER (V.O.)

(deep, gravelly voice)

You're clean and green for the next twenty clicks.

RUSTY

(gasps)

You hear that?! He actually answered me!

DEBBIE

What did it mean?

RUSTY

(still excited)

I don't know. No idea.

(into mic)

Copy that, good buddy. Over.

JAMES

He seems nice.

KEVIN

Can I try, Dad?

RUSTY

You bet. Just remember to say 'over' when you're done talking.

KEVIN

Got it.

He hands the mic back to Kevin.

KEVIN

(into mic)

Breaker one-nine, my friend Jesse says truck drivers are rapists. Are you a rapist?

RUSTY/DEBBIE

Kevin!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEVIN

Sorry.
 (into mic)
Over.

Rusty grabs back the mic.

RUSTY

(into mic, nervous
 Western accent)
 Uh, sorry 'bout that there, good
 buddy. You know how little boys
 are --
 (quickly)
 I mean in the sense that little
 boys can be unpredictable. Not in
 a way that suggests you're a
 pedophile or sex offender of any
 sort.
 (his Western accent
 fading as he
 rambles)
 I'm sure there are no more
 pedophile truck drivers than there
 are pedophile businessmen or
 pedophile doctors. Boy, I am
 saying 'pedophile' way more than I
 expected to here.

DEBBIE

(hushed)
 Just stop talking! You're worse
 than Kevin.

RUSTY

(into mic)
 Okay, so I guess that's over and
 out for now.

There's no response from the radio. Rusty glances
 nervously at the truck which is speeding along parallel
 to them.

RUSTY

Good buddy?
 (off nothing)
 Just to be clear, when I said
 'pedophile' --

Debbie GRABS THE MIC from Rusty, yanks out the plug and
 shoves the whole thing into the glove box.

RUSTY

So, that's the CB, kids. Neat,
 huh?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEVIN
What's a pedophile?

RUSTY
(to Debbie)
Honey, you want to take this?

EXT. HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Rusty accelerates and pulls away from the truck as quickly as the Colossus will allow.

EXT. REST STOP DINER - LATER

The Colossus is parked outside a no-frills diner.

INT. REST STOP DINER - CONTINUOUS ACTION

The Griswolds sit in a booth finishing lunch. Debbie absentmindedly slides her wedding ring up and down her finger.

KEVIN
I have to go the bathroom.

JAMES
Me too.

DEBBIE
Okay. James, keep an eye on Kevin.

The boys head off to the men's room. Kevin stops a passing WAITER.

KEVIN
Excuse me. My brother's a boy but he doesn't have a penis. Which bathroom should he use?

JAMES
Kevin!

BACK TO RUSTY AND DEBBIE

RUSTY
This is great, isn't it?

DEBBIE
There was hair in my sandwich and my iced tea.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

Not the food. The food had way too much hair in it. I'm talking about the trip. It's a nice change of pace, huh?

DEBBIE

Yeah.

(beat)

Remember when you first got your pilot's license and we talked about all the overseas trips we were going to take?

RUSTY

Yeah. But that was when I thought I was going to fly internationally. Econo Air's been pretty good to us.

Debbie nods understandingly, but we see a hint of regret in her eyes. Rusty notices.

RUSTY

Honey, everyone has big plans when they're young. But when you get older, you realize a lot of those plans are silly.

DEBBIE

Yeah, I know.

RUSTY

As far as I'm concerned, there's no place I'd rather be than right here with you and the boys.

Kevin and James hurry up to the table.

JAMES

Mom, Dad, there's two guys in one stall and it sounds like they're lifting something heavy.

Rusty jumps to his feet.

RUSTY

Okay, everyone out!

As they scramble to exit, Debbie wipes her hands one last time on her napkin. We PUSH IN as her WEDDING RING SLIPS UNNOTICED OFF HER FINGER onto the table.

EXT. REST STOP - MOMENTS LATER

The Griswolds' car heads back onto the highway. We PAN OVER to reveal the familiar TRUCK idling ominously with the TEDDY BEAR on the grill watching them go.

CUT TO:

SERIES OF SHOTS

as the Colossus exits the highway and heads into a city.

SUPERIMPOSE: MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

The giant vehicle cruises down BEALE STREET, passing neon-lit tourist traps, blues joints and a larger than life bronze statue of ELVIS.

EXT. HEARTBREAK HOTEL - NIGHT

The Griswolds pull up to the Elvis-themed hotel just across the street from Graceland. As they stiffly exit the car after a very long day of driving, we quickly ANGLE ON their JOINTS audibly POPPING and CRACKING: Rusty's neck, Debbie's back, the boys' knees and elbows.

RUSTY

See, I told you we could cover 700 miles today. No problem.

JAMES

I can't believe I'm actually in the birthplace of the blues!

KEVIN

I wish I could go back to your birthplace and kick you in the face.

JAMES

You wouldn't be alive then.

KEVIN

Wanna bet?

RUSTY

Come on, guys. We're 500 yards from where Elvis died on the toilet. Show some respect.

They head into the lobby. Rusty leans in to Debbie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

(quietly)
Just so you know, I reserved us
the 'Love Me Tender' suite.

DEBBIE

(playfully)
You hound dog.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

The family stands across from a FRONT DESK CLERK who wears an Elvis in Vegas-style outfit.

RUSTY

I don't understand. I called
ahead and reserved the 'Love Me
Tender' suite and a second room
for the kids.

CLERK

I'm sorry, sir. There must have
been some mistake. The 'Love Me
Tender' suite is taken. We have
all of you in one room.

DEBBIE

Are there any other rooms
available?

CLERK

I'm afraid not. But your room
does have four bunks.

RUSTY

Bunks?

INT. JAILHOUSE ROCK ROOM - MINUTES LATER

The Griswolds react as the CLERK shows them into a tiny
room done up to resemble a jail cell, complete with
concrete floors, twin-size bunk beds and bars on the
windows.

CLERK

Here we are. The 'Jailhouse Rock'
room. I hereby sentence you to a
good night's sleep.

(beat)

Oh, and there's free Wi-Fi.

He shuts the door. Kevin immediately jumps onto a bed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEVIN
I call bottom bunk.

JAMES
Dad, I don't like it in here.

KEVIN (O.S.)
I do. It's awesome.

They look over to see Kevin doing tricep dips on the side of his bunk like a hardened inmate.

RUSTY
There. See? Kevin's got the right attitude.

DEBBIE
(quietly)
So much for our romantic evening.

RUSTY
Guess I brought this for nothing.

He holds up the familiar Sade CD.

DEBBIE
(flat)
Darn.

EXT. GRACELAND - NEXT MORNING

The Griswolds enter the front gate of the famous mansion. James notices a street performer, an OLD AFRICAN-AMERICAN BLUESMAN, sitting on a milk crate beside the entrance, playing a soulful song on a well-worn guitar.

RUSTY
Here it is. The house that Elvis built!

JAMES
Is it okay if I catch up with you inside?
(re: the Bluesman)
This guy is really speaking my language.

DEBBIE
Uh, sure, honey. Don't be too long.

They head inside while James closes his eyes and listens to the old man jam.

INT. GRACELAND - MINUTES LATER

Rusty, Debbie and Kevin stand with a half dozen other VISITORS while a female TOUR GUIDE, who is a little off, leads them through the lavishly decorated house.

TOUR GUIDE

This is Elvis' salon where he would entertain guests, wrap gifts or just relax with one his trademark peanut butter and banana sandwiches.

A few visitors chuckle.

TOUR GUIDE

Sounds like some of you know about those sandwiches. That's why you're laughing, isn't it?

A handful of the visitors nod.

TOUR GUIDE

Now you're nodding. Because you agree with what I said, don't you? Uh-huh. Okay. Now, if you look around the salon, you'll notice there are three different types of velvet. There's crushed velvet in the drapes, cut velvet on the love seat and plain weave velvet on the throw pillows. Elvis loved velvet.

(beat)

I see one of you is nodding again. You probably knew that Elvis loved velvet and that's why you nodded? Okay...

The group moves on.

ANGLE ON KEVIN

who couldn't be more bored.

KEVIN

This sucks.

DEBBIE

Kevin.

(then, sotto to
Rusty)

This sucks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

Well, maybe we should break away
from the group. Take a look
around ourselves.

DEBBIE

Are we allowed?

Rusty looks around and spots a roped-off room and a sign
that reads "No Tour Access." Rusty puts his hand over
the word "No."

RUSTY

The sign says 'Tour Access.'

DEBBIE

(smiling
conspiratorially)

Russ.

KEVIN

Cool.

Unnoticed by anyone, Rusty unhooks the rope and they
sneak away.

EXT. GRACELAND - CONTINUOUS ACTION

The Bluesman finishes his song and looks up when he hears
James clapping for him.

BLUESMAN

Thank you, son. I don't get many
standing ovations anymore.

JAMES

Well, you should. That was
amazing.

BLUESMAN

You play?

JAMES

Uh, yeah, a little.

BLUESMAN

What's your name?

JAMES

James.

BLUESMAN

Show me what you got, James.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The old man hands James his guitar.

JAMES
(nervously)
Yeah? Okay. Uh... here goes...

James begins to play a not at all bluesy tune: Joni Mitchell's "Both Sides Now."

JAMES
*Bows and flows of angel hair/And
ice cream castles in the air/And
feather canyons everywhere/I've
looked at clouds that way...*

OFF the Bluesman's nonplussed reaction --

INT. GRACELAND BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Rusty peeks his head into Elvis' off-limits MASTER BEDROOM. It is predictably opulent. He beckons to Debbie and Kevin who follow him in.

RUSTY
Wow. Look at that bed.

DEBBIE
I guess any bed Elvis slept in was
'King' sized.

RUSTY
Good one, hon.

They continue into --

INT. ELVIS' CLOSET - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Rows and rows of bedazzled suits and brightly colored stage costumes hang along the walls of the giant walk-in closet.

KEVIN
Whoa.

Rusty runs his hand along the outfits until one accidentally falls off its hanger. As he bends down to pick it up, he notices a barely visible seam in the wall behind the clothes. It appears to be a hidden door.

RUSTY
What the...?

EXT. GRACELAND - SAME TIME

James is finishing up his song.

JAMES

(singing)
*I've looked at life from both
 sides now/From win and lose, and
 still somehow/It's clouds'
 illusions I recall/I really don't
 know life... at all.*

James self-consciously hands the old man back his guitar.

BLUESMAN

All right, then. You got some
 chops, boy.

JAMES

Aw, thanks. I'm no Joni
 Mitchell...

BLUESMAN

I've got a buddy over at Sun
 Records who would love your sound.

JAMES

(thrilled)
 Really?! I'm not too young?

BLUESMAN

Heck no. Muddy Waters was 16 when
 he started out. Trust me. I know
 talent. I jammed with all the
 greats. B.B. King, Stevie Ray,
 even Elvis himself.

JAMES

No kidding?

The Bluesman starts to play again.

BLUESMAN

That's right. In fact, I'm
 jamming with him right now.

He looks over at the empty space beside him.

BLUESMAN

(to no one)
 Ain't that right, Elvis?

James doesn't know how to react. Is he kidding?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BLUESMAN
 (still to no one)
 Elvis, meet James.

James' face falls. The guy's not kidding.

BLUESMAN
 James, aren't you gonna shake the
 King's hand?
 (intense)
 You're embarrassing me, boy.

James starts to back away.

JAMES
 Uh...

BLUESMAN
 Where you going?

JAMES
 I should probably get back.

The Bluesman grabs James' arm in a claw-like grip. His eyes widen crazily.

BLUESMAN
 I already told everybody at Sun
 Records about you. You were
 supposed to be there last week!

Yanking his arm free, James hurries toward the mansion.

JAMES
 (terrified)
 Agh!

BLUESMAN
 (yelling after him)
 Jimmy, wait! I need your uterus!

The old man shakes his head as he begins to lower his pants and squats, presumably to take a dump.

INT. HIDDEN ROOM - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Light from the closet fills a small, dark room as Rusty pushes open a 3-foot-high door. He feels around for a light switch and flips it on revealing:

The walls are plastered with 1950's black and white beefcake shots of bathing suit-clad men. On a small table sits a framed photo of a young ROCK HUDSON kissing a YOUNG ELVIS on the cheek.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

It's signed, "To EP, We'll always have Tahiti. Love, RH." Rusty has stumbled on ELVIS' SECRET GAY ROOM.

RUSTY

Holy moly.

Debbie and Kevin stick their heads in.

DEBBIE

Oh my.

Kevin picks up the Rock Hudson photo and examines it.

KEVIN

What is all this stuff?

RUSTY

(to Debbie)

Honey, you want to take this?

EXT. GRACELAND - ELVIS' GRAVESITE - MOMENTS LATER

Rusty, Debbie and Kevin hurry toward the exit, passing Elvis' grave as they go. A group of TOURISTS stand around the grave, paying their respects.

James rushes up to his parents.

JAMES

Mom, Dad! This crazy guy tried to --

RUSTY

Not now, buddy. We're getting out of here. Let's go.

As they leave, Kevin hangs back, noticing a WOMAN placing a wreath on Elvis' grave alongside other mementos left by fans. He takes the FRAMED GAY PHOTO from his jacket and sets it on the grave. He nods to himself, feeling he's done a good thing, then hurries to catch up with his family.

ANGLE ON THE GRISWOLDS

leaving the memorial garden. BEHIND THEM we see PEOPLE begin to notice the photo and react with shocked GASPS. A CROWD quickly forms and we hear SHOUTS, SCREAMS and, inexplicably, GLASS BREAKING. One MAN PUNCHES another and a RIOT takes shape as the Griswolds obliviously head to their car.

EXT. HIGHWAY - SHORT TIME LATER

The Colossus speeds down the road, as Memphis recedes into the distance.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Rusty fiddles with the GPS as he drives. In the backseat, Kevin torments James by repeatedly trying to pull a plastic bag over his brother's head.

JAMES

Cut it out!

KEVIN

I just want to see how long you can hold your breath before you die.

He tries it again.

JAMES

Mom, Kevin's trying to kill me again!

DEBBIE

Kevin. Do not kill your brother.

RUSTY

(re: GPS)
All right, next stop: University of Arkansas. Let's see how far it is.

GPS VOICE (V.O.)

(calm English female)
You are 147 miles from your destination.

RUSTY

Not bad. Let me just check the best route...

Rusty pushes a button.

GPS VOICE (V.O.)

(calm German female)
In sechs kilometer, biegen Sie rechts ab--

RUSTY

Whoops. Think I changed the language here. Let me just...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He pushes another button.

GPS VOICE (V.O.)
(calm French female)
Dans six kilomètres tournez à
droite--

RUSTY
That's not it.

He pushes the button again.

GPS VOICE (V.O.)
(angry Korean male)
Jebalneun jwahoejeon!!

DEBBIE
What is that?!

RUSTY
I think it's Korean.

GPS VOICE (V.O.)
Gyesog hyeonjae noseon!!

DEBBIE
It's terrible! Change it back,
Russ.

RUSTY
The menu is all in Korean now. I
don't know what to push.

He tries various buttons, but it seems to only make the
Korean voice angrier.

GPS VOICE (V.O.)
MOGSOLINEUN-I BOLLYUM-EISS-EUL
GEOYEYO!!!!

The Korean voice PANTS heavily from the exertion.

JAMES
Why is he so much angrier than the
other voices?

RUSTY
Okay, we'll just leave it alone.
We've got maps. No biggie. Who
knows. Maybe we'll all learn
Korean by the time we get to
Walley World.

ANGLE ON JAMES

whose eye is suddenly caught by a passing JEEP WRANGLER with the top down. Sitting in the back seat is a VERY CUTE GIRL his own age. The WIND WHIPS THROUGH her HAIR as we go into SLOW MOTION. James is transfixed.

The girl notices him and smiles.

Embarrassed, James looks away. After a moment, he looks back and sees that the girl is still smiling. She gives him a wave. James waves sheepishly back.

Suddenly, a PLASTIC BAG is THRUST over James' head, squashing his face as it smothers him. The girl's smile fades as James struggles to yank off the bag. He manages to pierce the plastic with his tongue so he can breathe. The girl is understandably disgusted. At last, James manages to free himself.

JAMES

(to Kevin, gasping)
What is wrong with you?!

KEVIN

What's wrong with you?

James turns back to the girl, but her car has pulled away from theirs. She's gone. James sighs heavily.

EXT. UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS CAMPUS - DAY

The Colossus rolls down SORORITY ROW. In Korean:

SUPERIMPOSE: FAYATEVILLE, ARKANSAS

DEBBIE (V.O.)

There it is. Kappa Delta. I'll call Heather.

The car pulls up and parks. As the Griswolds climb out of the car, the front door of the sorority house opens and HEATHER, a hot 20-year-old, steps outside holding a cell phone. She waves.

HEATHER

Hey, guys!

DEBBIE

There she is. She looks good.
(waving back)
Hi, honey!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Heather takes a couple steps and immediately STUMBLES forward off the porch, landing face first on the lawn.

RUSTY

Uh-oh.

Rusty and Debbie hurry over to help Heather to her feet. Her speech is slightly slurred, and she seems to be quite drunk.

HEATHER

I always forget about those asshole steps.

RUSTY

Whoa! Okay.

DEBBIE

(to Heather)
Are you all right?

HEATHER

I'm great. It's super good to see you, Aunt Debbie.

DEBBIE

You too.
(calling)
Kevin! James! Come say hi.

HEATHER

Oh my God. Kevin James is here?!

DEBBIE

No. Those are our kids. Kevin and James. You've met them.

HEATHER

(disappointed)
Oh. That sucks.

The boys each hug Heather. Kevin holds on a bit longer than is appropriate.

KEVIN

It's really good to see you, Heather. You smell nice.

James looks on, disgusted.

HEATHER

Come on in, guys! I've got a couple friends over. They are the shit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

Whoa! All right.

INT. SORORITY HOUSE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

The Griswolds react as they realize a RAUCOUS PARTY is in full swing. Dozens of FRAT BOYS and SORORITY GIRLS guzzle beer and cavort. COEDs take turns dancing on a STRIPPER POLE that's been set up in the living room. James looks intimidated. Kevin is psyched.

RUSTY

This is a 'couple friends'?

HEATHER

(shouting over the
music)

Everyone! This is my family!

Absolutely no one listens or cares.

Heather nearly trips again and giggles.

HEATHER

Oopsie.

Debbie turns to the boys.

DEBBIE

You know what? I think maybe you guys should wait in the car. James, keep an eye on your brother.

JAMES

Okay, Mom. Come on, Kev. Let's go somewhere a little more kid-friendly.

KEVIN

Ugh, shut up.

The boys head off. Kevin immediately disappears into the crowd of partygoers.

JAMES

Kevin, come back! Where are you going?

Rusty can't take his eyes off the GIRL who is working the stripper pole. Debbie leans in to him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEBBIE

(sotto)

She is completely drunk.

RUSTY

(distracted)

She seems pretty coordinated to me.

DEBBIE

I'm talking about Heather.

RUSTY

Oh. Yeah.

DEBBIE

I guess now we know why she was in a car accident. She must have been driving drunk. And she's learned nothing from it.

RUSTY

Yeah.

DEBBIE

We have to talk to her, Russ.

RUSTY

We should wait till she's finished dancing.

DEBBIE

I'm talking about Heather!

RUSTY

Right.

(then)

I'm not sure it's our business, honey.

DEBBIE

She's my sister's daughter. I have a responsibility here.

Debbie leads Heather to a quiet corner. Rusty reluctantly follows.

HEATHER

What's wrong?

DEBBIE

(stern)

Okay, Heather, listen to me. I've been where you are. I went to college. I was a Tri-Delt.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEBBIE (CONT'D)

I did my share of partying and hooking up. They used to call me 'Debbie Do-Anything.'

During the following, Rusty reacts to Debbie's revelations with increasing surprise.

DEBBIE

I would get drunk every weekend and wake up in a different dorm or professor's house.

HEATHER

Why are you telling me this?

DEBBIE

Because I don't want you to make the same mistakes I made. Your college years are precious. Sure, it's fun to do body shots until somebody drops you off in front of a hospital. Or to make out with a dog for Mardi Gras beads. But before you know it, college will be over and you'll wish you had taken advantage of this amazing opportunity.

RUSTY

It's true, Heather. I once missed two days of classes playing *Sim City*. That's time I can never get back.

They both look at Rusty, unmoved.

RUSTY

I'll let you two talk.

He returns to watch the action at the stripper pole.

INT. SORORITY HOUSE HALLWAY - SAME TIME

James walks down a hall passing various scenes of debauchery. A GUY "motorboating" a big-breasted GIRL in a tank top blocks the hall.

JAMES

Excuse me, if I could just --

He squeezes past.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES
 (calling)
 Kevin?

He turns a corner and enters --

INT. SORORITY HOUSE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS ACTION

THREE GEEKY-LOOKING COLLEGE GUYS with wispy mustaches are engaged in a heated debate.

GEEK #1
 Face it, dude. Jack Kerouac was nothing but a narcissistic, syphilitic drunk.

GEEK #2
 You're insane. He's a genius. He redefined the modern novel.

GEEK #1
 Leaving out punctuation doesn't make you a genius. It makes you a bad writer.

JAMES
 Whoa.

They turn and look at him.

GEEK #3
 Who are you?

JAMES
 Oh. Sorry. I'm James. I like Kerouac.

GEEK #2
 All right! A fellow 'desolation angel.' Come on in, James. Let's educate this Philistine, shall we?

James gets a big smile and joins them.

INT. SORORITY HOUSE REC ROOM - CONTINUOUS ACTION

A cute, tipsy girl, LINDSAY, 19, sits on a sofa with SKYLER, a douchey frat boy who hits on her. Kevin steps up to them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEVIN

(to Skyler)
Hey, bro. Your mom's out front
looking for you.

SKYLER

Seriously? What the hell...?

He gets up and hurries off. Kevin immediately takes his seat.

KEVIN

I'm Kevin. 'Sup?

Lindsay regards him curiously.

INT. SORORITY HOUSE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Rusty pretends to check out the framed photos of alumni while discreetly ogling a new GIRL, who is working the stripper pole.

Two GIRLS approach him, SHEENA and MANDI.

SHEENA

Are you a cop or something?

RUSTY

Me? No. I'm a pilot.

MANDI

Ooh, like a fighter pilot?

RUSTY

(beat)
Uh-huh.

SHEENA

Cool. What's an old guy like you
doing here?

MANDI

Sheena! Don't be rude.

SHEENA

No, I think he's hot.
(then)
He reminds me of my dad.

RUSTY

Hm.

MANDI

You like our stripper pole?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

Is that what that is? I didn't even notice that.

SHEENA

You want to try it?

RUSTY

Oh, no. I'm just waiting for --

MANDI

Come on! It's easy.

They lead him toward the pole. Other KIDS notice and cheer him on.

RUSTY

I wouldn't know the first thing about --

CROWD

Old guy! Old guy! Old guy!

Despite what they're cheering, Rusty is enjoying the attention.

RUSTY

Well, maybe for a second.

Rusty grabs the pole and "casually" swings around it a few times. The crowd EXPLODES.

RUSTY

This is actually kind of fun.

He gets a bit more creative, throwing his legs around the pole and spinning.

ABERCROMBIE DUDE

Old guy's the man!

Rusty is loving this.

INT. SORORITY HOUSE KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

James sits with the geeks.

JAMES

(passionate)

WHAT?! How can you say *On the Road* is a rip-off of *Catcher in the Rye* when they were written in the same year?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEEK #1

Sorry, James. *Catcher* came out in '51. *On the Road* was '57.

JAMES

Wrong! Kerouac wrote it in '51. It took him six years to find a publisher!

GEEK #2

(to Geek #1)
Owned!

GEEK #3

You lose, sir!

GEEK #1

(bows his head)
I yield.

JAMES

Man, college is awesome. It's so nice to finally meet people who are like me.

He notices Geek #1 is using a mortar to grind something up in a bowl.

JAMES

What are you doing?

GEEK #1

Grinding up Adderall, Vicodin and Xanax.

JAMES

Why?

Geek #2 SNORTS a big line of the drugs through a straw.

GEEK #2

'Cause we're fucking miserable.

GEEK #1

We're losers, James. Everyone hates us.

Geek #1 snorts a line. James' face falls as he backs out of this deeply disappointing room.

INT. SORORITY HOUSE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS ACTION

James comes out of the bedroom. He finds Kevin assisting Lindsay, who leans heavily on his shoulder as he leads her down the hall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES

There you are.

KEVIN

(to Lindsay)

Come on, let's get you to bed.

LINDSAY

(slurred)

You're short, but you're nice...

JAMES

Kevin, let's go!

James pulls Kevin away, and they head toward the exit. Lindsay totters for a moment, then tips forward, her forehead clunking against a framed picture on the wall. She stays like that.

LINDSAY

(slurred)

You're glass, but you're nice...

INT. SORORITY HOUSE - SAME TIME

Debbie and Heather are as we left them.

DEBBIE

I just don't want you to waste your college years being drunk.

HEATHER

Drunk? What are you talking about?

DEBBIE

Come on, Heather. You can barely walk, your speech is slurred --

HEATHER

I'm not drunk. Didn't my mom tell you what happened?

DEBBIE

Yes, she said you were in a car accident. Drinking and driving is very serious.

HEATHER

I wasn't drinking. I wasn't even driving. A car hit me when I was crossing the street. I suffered brain damage that affected my speech and balance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Debbie couldn't look any more guilty.

DEBBIE

Honey, I -- I'm so sorry. I just assumed you were --

HEATHER

A drunk? This is what people with disabilities have to live with. Even with their own families.

Debbie couldn't look any more guilty.

HEATHER

I have to go. I have an appointment with my physical therapist.

DEBBIE

Well, you stick with it. You'll be better before you know it.

HEATHER

(cold)
Don't patronize me, Aunt Debbie.
(noticing)
And besides, if you want to worry about someone, maybe it should be your husband.

DEBBIE

Huh?

Heather points behind her, and Debbie turns to see Rusty HANGING UPSIDE DOWN AT THE TOP OF THE STRIPPER POLE, his legs splayed out like a demented stripper.

All around him, the crowd cheers "OLD GUY! OLD GUY!" as a few FRAT BOYS shake their beers and douse Rusty with the spray.

As Debbie's expression turns to horror, James and Kevin step up beside her. Their expressions also turn to horror.

All at once, the top of the pole TEARS FREE FROM THE CEILING, sending Rusty and the pole toppling onto Sheena and Mandy. Plaster falls everywhere. People scream in the chaos.

Debbie puts her head in her hands, while unnoticed behind her, Heather takes two discreet SHOTS OF TEQUILA.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DUSK

The Colossus continues westward through Arkansas.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Rusty drives in silence through the flat landscape. He glances over at Debbie, who reads a hardcover copy of *The Help*. She doesn't glance back.

The radio plays the final bars of Annie Lennox's "No More 'I Love You's'."

The next song fades in.

MUSIC CUE: Tracy Chapman's "Fast Car."

RUSTY

I don't believe it. I love this song.

Kevin groans. James is indifferent.

RUSTY

Come on, everyone. Sing it with me!

With great passion and sincerity, Rusty sings along with Tracy Chapman.

RUSTY

(singing)
'You've got a fast car/I want a ticket to anywhere --' Come on, guys. 'Maybe we make a deal/Maybe together we can get somewhere...'
 Deb?

Rusty looks over at Debbie hopefully, but she's not up for it.

RUSTY

(singing)
'Anyplace is better --' Guys, no?

The boys don't join in.

RUSTY

'Starting from zero we've got nothing to lose/Maybe we'll make something/But me myself I've got nothing to prove --' Kevin? James?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEVIN

This song sucks, Dad.

JAMES

I like Tracy's deeper cuts.

RUSTY

What?! This is one of the most beautiful --

(singing)

*'I remember we were driving,
driving in your car/the speed so
fast felt like I was drunk --' I
cannot believe no one in this
family wants to --*

(singing)

*'And I-I-I-I had a feeling that I
belonged...' Anyone? 'I-I-I-I had
a feeling I could be someone, be
someone, be some --' agghhh!*

SFX: TRUCK HORN.

The whole family JUMPS as they look out the back window to see the familiar TRUCK with the TEDDY BEAR, directly on their tail, flashing its blinding lights at them.

DEBBIE

Oh my God!

JAMES

He's come back to kill us!

The Colossus SWERVES in and out of the lane trying to evade the truck.

RUSTY

You call a guy a pedophile a half-dozen times and he won't let it go.

KEVIN

Gun it, Dad! Lose him!

RUSTY

I'm not gunning anything. This is just a misunderstanding --

SFX: TRUCK HORN BLARES TWICE MORE.

The 18-wheeler practically touches the rear bumper of their car.

DEBBIE

Gun it, Russ.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

Gunning it.

Rusty floors it, and they begin to PULL AWAY from the truck. Their speedometer edges up toward 95 mph.

JAMES

Faster, Dad! Go faster!

RUSTY

I'm driving a tank. It won't go any faster!

Slowly but surely, the truck is closing the gap between them. Just then, Rusty spots an exit a quarter mile ahead.

RUSTY

Everyone buckled in?

They all nod, terrified, as they near the offramp.

RUSTY

Okay, hang on tight.

The truck has now caught up again and is closing in on their bumper. At the last possible second, Rusty VEERS to the right, BOUNCING over the divider, SCRAPING along a guardrail and SMASHING OPEN a large WATER BARREL, soaking the car.

ALL

AGGGHHHHH!

It's too late for the truck to follow. It's forced to continue down the highway.

Rusty manages to SCREECH to a stop at the bottom of the offramp. He and the others are silent except for their heavy breathing. After a beat:

RUSTY

I think we lost him.
(laughing nervously)
Wow, that was quite a --

GPS VOICE (V.O.)

(barking)
JEBAL BEOBJEOG-EULO U-TEON!!

The Griswolds all JUMP, startled by the angry Korean voice.

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

The Colossus, with a new scratch down one side, is parked outside a rundown two-story motel.

INT. MOTEL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Rusty unlocks a room and hands the key to James.

RUSTY
Okay, guys, this is you.

Kevin runs inside.

KEVIN
I call both beds!

James gives Rusty a forlorn look.

RUSTY
You get one bed, Kevin.
(to James)
If you need anything, Mom and I
are right next door.

JAMES
I think I saw a hot tub outside.
Is it okay if I take a soak?

RUSTY
Sure. But if anyone tries to
shove you in their car, you
scratch them like I showed you.

JAMES
I will.

RUSTY
Atta boy.

INT. MOTEL ROOM BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Debbie wears a nightgown and brushes her teeth.
Suddenly, from the bedroom she hears

MUSIC CUE: Sade's "Smooth Operator."

RUSTY (O.S.)
Alone at last.

Debbie turns to see Rusty has entered.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

Come here, you.

He grabs her and kisses her for several seconds. When he pulls away, his mouth is covered in white foam. Debbie leans over the sink and spits out the toothpaste that was in her mouth.

DEBBIE

I was brushing my teeth.

RUSTY

Now I don't have to.

(then)

So, that stuff you were telling Heather today about how crazy you were in college...

DEBBIE

Russ, that was a long time ago, and I was just trying to scare her.

RUSTY

So, they didn't really call you 'Debbie Do-Anything'?

DEBBIE

No, they did. But I obviously didn't do anything.

RUSTY

Of course. You didn't actually sleep with your professors.

DEBBIE

No, I did.

RUSTY

Oh. Do you ever miss that lifestyle?

DEBBIE

Nah. It's like you said: part of getting older is realizing some of the things you used to do were silly.

Rusty tries to read her expression.

RUSTY

Are you... bored with me?

DEBBIE

Bored? No, not really.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

What then?

DEBBIE

I guess, I feel like we've stopped
being romantic.

RUSTY

Really? What about the Sade?
What about the candles?

DEBBIE

It's always the same thing, Russ.

RUSTY

There's a choice of candles...

DEBBIE

Yeah. But it would be nice to be
surprised once in a while, y'know?
(then)
I'm gonna take a shower.

RUSTY

(light bulb)
I'll take one with you.

DEBBIE

What?

RUSTY

Surprised?

DEBBIE

Well, yeah. We've never done that
before.

RUSTY

Exactly. What do you say, Debbie
Do-Anything?

DEBBIE

(smiles)
Let's do it.

She pulls open the shower curtain and they both recoil as
they take in the MOST DISGUSTING BATHTUB in the world:
mildew, fungus, odd brown stains.

DEBBIE/RUSTY

Ooh!/Ugh!

DEBBIE

Are those mushrooms?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

Looks like someone blew their head
off in there.

They both deflate as the "romantic" moment passes.

RUSTY

Raincheck?

DEBBIE

Yeah.

EXT. MOTEL - CONTINUOUS ACTION

James sits at the edge of the hot tub, his feet dangling
in the water as he quietly strums James Taylor's "Fire
and Rain" on his guitar.

ADENA (O.S.)

You're pretty good.

Startled, James lets out a girlish YELP and drops his
guitar into the hot tub. He quickly fishes it out and
looks behind him to see ADENA, the cute girl he saw
earlier on the highway.

ADENA

Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to
scare you.

JAMES

(flustered)
Uh, no, that's okay.
(then, recognizing
her)
Hey, you were in that Jeep.

ADENA

And you were in that plastic bag.
Good to see you survived.

James blushes.

JAMES

That was my stupid brother.

ADENA

I know how it is. Big brothers
suck.

JAMES

Yeah... big...

There's a beat. Then:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ADENA

I have a penis.

JAMES

Wh-what?!

ADENA

It's on your guitar.

JAMES

(looking down,
freaked out)

It is?!

He realizes she's referring to the writing on his guitar.

JAMES

Oh... yeah. I didn't write that.

ADENA

Is that the brand name?

Gathering his nerve, James plays along.

JAMES

Yeah, I was gonna get either a
Gibson or... an I Have A Penis.

ADENA

(chuckling)
I'm Adena.

JAMES

James.

ADENA

Well, we've gotta get up super-
early tomorrow, so I better go.
But maybe I'll run into you down
the road.

JAMES

Sounds good. Maybe I'll let you
play with my penis -- my I Have A
Penis. The guitar! Sorry, I
messed that up.

ADENA

Yeah, you did.

She heads off.

JAMES

(calling after her)
Sorry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY (O.S.)

Hey, buddy.

Startled, James YELPS and drops his guitar into the hot tub again. He quickly fishes it out as Rusty sits down beside him, rolls up his pant legs and puts his feet in the water.

RUSTY

Saw you talking to that pretty gal. Thought I'd come down in case you needed a wingman.

JAMES

(embarrassed)
Oh, uh, yeah. She seemed cool.

RUSTY

She sure did.
(beat, tentatively)
Is that the sort of person you would be interested in... gender-wise?

JAMES

What do you mean?

RUSTY

Nothing. Just that she was a girl and some boys like girls and some boys, y'know, like... other things.

JAMES

I like girls, Dad.

RUSTY

Of course you do. And if you didn't, wouldn't matter. Your mom and I love you either --

JAMES

I like girls.

RUSTY

(gently)
... and boys?

JAMES

Just girls.

RUSTY

Okay. Doesn't matter.

He puts an arm around James' shoulders.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

You know, James, when I was your age your Grandpa Clark sat me down and we had a little chat. I think this might be a good time for you and I to have that chat.

JAMES

About what?

RUSTY

Well, about girls. And what sorts of things you might do with girls and to girls as you grow into a man.

JAMES

Oh, no, Dad. I don't want to --

RUSTY

I know it's embarrassing. But it'll be more embarrassing if you find yourself naked with a lady friend and you don't know what goes where.

JAMES

I know what goes where!

RUSTY

Just hear me out. See, when you get to be 21, 22 and you've been dating someone for a year or so, there may come a night when she finally allows you to make love to her. Now, if you're blessed with your dad's unusual size down there, you're going to want to get a hold of some of those smaller, 'snugger fit' condoms they make in Asia.

JAMES

(wanting to die)
Dad!

RUSTY

Okay. You can also use a regular-size one and pull it over your testicles.

James buries his face in his hands.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

Look, I know you're thinking you're only 14, and it's bound to keep growing... but trust me, that's as big as it's gonna get.

(then)

Your little brother's a freak. I don't even know where that thing came from.

JAMES

(to himself)

Oh, my God...

RUSTY

The main thing is, I want you to know I'm here to answer any questions you might have about any of this stuff. No matter how embarrassing it seems.

There's a beat.

JAMES

Well, these kids at school were talking about 'doing 69' the other day. What is that?

Rusty stares at him for a beat, then gets to his feet.

RUSTY

Good talk, James.

Rusty tussles James' hair, then heads back to his room.

JAMES

(nonplussed)

Thanks, Dad.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NEXT MORNING

The Colossus heads west through Arkansas.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Debbie pushes a button on the GPS.

GPS (V.O.)

(barking)

Dangsin-ui mogjeogji balo ap-e isseubnida!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

Hear that, kids? We should get to Aunt Audrey's by tonight.

DEBBIE

You actually understood that?

RUSTY

Of course not. The sign said Dallas was 300 miles away.

KEVIN

Will Uncle Stone be there?

Rusty grimaces at the name of his brother-in-law.

RUSTY

(unenthused)
I suppose he will.

KEVIN

Uncle Stone is cool.

JAMES

You have to be cool to be a celebrity.

RUSTY

He's not exactly a celebrity.
He's just a local weatherman.

DEBBIE

Audrey says the network is grooming him for 'Good Morning, America.'

RUSTY

Yeah? That's great. You know who else is a celebrity? Someone who flies thousands of people every year safely to their destinations.

KEVIN

Isn't that just a pilot?

JAMES

Mom, do you think Uncle Stone will let me ride his horse?

DEBBIE

I don't see why not.

KEVIN

Do you think I can shoot his guns?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEBBIE

I don't think so.

RUSTY

I never would've imagined my
sister marrying such a
conservative.

DEBBIE

Just because Stone's politics are
different from ours doesn't mean
he's not good-looking.

(quickly correcting
herself)

-- a good person.

Rusty gives her a perturbed look.

They pass a sign that reads "Hot Springs National Park --
Exit 2 miles."

DEBBIE

Ooh, hot springs. I've always
wanted to try that.

Seeing an opportunity to be spontaneous and "fun," Rusty
gets an idea.

RUSTY

Let's try it now.

DEBBIE

We don't want to be late for
dinner at your sister's.

RUSTY

So we're a couple minutes late.
My wife wants a hot spring, she's
gonna get a hot spring.

Debbie smiles, pleasantly surprised.

EXT. HOT SPRINGS NATIONAL PARK ENTRANCE - SHORT TIME
LATER

The Colossus pulls up to the tail-end of an endless line
of cars waiting to enter the park.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS ACTION

KEVIN

Aw man, look at the line.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEBBIE

Yeah, this is going to take forever.

RUSTY

Come on, guys. How often do we get to soak in hot water?

JAMES

Every time we take a bath.

RUSTY

But this is natural. It's heated in Mother Nature's bowels.

KEVIN

Gross.

RUSTY

There's got to be another way in.

Rusty spots two shaggy-looking LOCAL MEN walking along the side of the road.

RUSTY

I'm going to ask those gentlemen. I bet they know.

Rusty rolls down his window and beckons to the men.

RUSTY

Excuse me, fellas?

The men cross over to the Colossus.

RUSTY

Do you know if there's another entrance to the hot springs? Y'know, like a secret entrance?

LOCAL #1

Hmm.

(to his friend)

Terry, should we tell him about the secret entrance?

LOCAL #2

Why not? They look like nice folks.

He points to a narrow, gravel road leading into the forest up ahead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOCAL #2

See that road up there? You follow that, that'll take you right up to the hot springs. Secret-like.

RUSTY

Perfect. Thank you, guys.

LOCAL #1

You bet. Y'all have fun.

The locals walk off. Rusty pulls out of the line and turns into the forest road.

DEBBIE

Are you sure about this? No one else is going this way.

RUSTY

That's because most people think inside the box. But you know who thinks outside the box?

KEVIN

Uncle Stone?

RUSTY

(annoyed)
Me. Your dad.

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - MINUTES LATER

The Colossus reaches a dead end and stops. Rusty and the others climb out.

DEBBIE

I don't see any hot springs.

RUSTY

Hang on...

He pushes aside some branches and down a short hill he sees an IDYLLIC GLEN with shafts of sunlight through the pines, chirping songbirds and a carpet of moss and pine needles. In the center is a SPARKLING POOL OF WATER.

DEBBIE

Honey, it's beautiful.

RUSTY

Isn't it?
(to the kids)
Everyone into their bathing suits.

EXT. FOREST TRAIL - LATER

The Griswolds, in bathing suits and flip-flops, hike along the narrow wooded trail.

JAMES

Where is everybody?

RUSTY

I guess we found our own private hot spring. Let's call it 'Griswold Springs.'

Debbie gives him a peck on the cheek. Rusty beams as they arrive at the water's edge.

RUSTY

Now make sure you ease in slowly. Hot springs can be very hot.

They all take off their flip-flops and carefully submerge themselves in the water, reacting to the water temperature.

DEBBIE

Ooh!

RUSTY

Oh boy!

JAMES

Wow, this is --

KEVIN

Freezing!

DEBBIE

(shivering)

Russ, this isn't hot at all.

RUSTY

No, it's pretty brisk, isn't it? Maybe if we find the source, we'll get the hotter water.

They wade around, increasingly cold and shivering.

JAMES

I don't think I like Griswold Springs.

RUSTY

(teeth chattering)

Aw, come on. This is how the Indians bathed!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEVIN
My balls are gone!

RUSTY
They're not gone. They just went
inside to protect themselves.

DEBBIE
It smells a little funky in here.

RUSTY
That's just the sulfur. That's
natural.

JAMES
Dad? I think I found the source.

ANGLE ON JAMES

who points to a pipe that is dumping brown SEWAGE RUNOFF
into the pond.

ANOTHER ANGLE

RUSTY
What the -- ?

KEVIN
Look, James, I found a dart.

Kevin is holding a hypodermic needle. He tosses it at
James, who dodges it.

JAMES
Are you crazy?!

DEBBIE
Okay, everyone out of --

SFX: CAR ALARM

RUSTY
Is that our car alarm?

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - MINUTES LATER

The Griswolds, shivering in their bathing suits, stare
forlornly at the Colossus which has been BROKEN INTO. A
rear window is SHATTERED and all of their luggage is
gone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEVIN

You've gotta be shitting me!

RUSTY

Why didn't those local guys warn us there were thieves in these woods?

(realizing)

Oh. Right.

JAMES

They stole my guitar.

DEBBIE

Not to mention all our money.

JAMES

Not all our money.

He reaches into his bathing suit and begins rooting around, to the confusion and discomfort of the others.

DEBBIE

James.

JAMES

Just give me a second, Mom. I'm trying to get this off.

RUSTY

James!

JAMES

Here it comes.

He pulls out a waterproof nylon pouch which he unzips to reveal some cash.

RUSTY

What is that?

JAMES

My emergency money pouch. Little trick I picked up from Hemingway.

RUSTY

Good job, son.

(noticing)

Oh, and look, Deb. They left your book.

He hands Debbie her copy of *The Help*.

RUSTY

Looks like we get the last laugh!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEBBIE

Last laugh?! We don't even have anything to wear!

RUSTY

Don't worry. I'm sure Arkansas has plenty of fine clothing stores.

EXT. GUM SPRINGS GENERAL STORE - LATER

The Colossus is parked outside a podunk store. Signs in the window read "Nightcrawlers 50 cents each" and "Men's Slacks \$4.99"

After a beat, Rusty and Debbie emerge from the store, followed by the boys, in their new outfits:

Rusty wears jean shorts and a T-shirt with a CONFEDERATE FLAG, beneath the phrase "Never Apologize." Debbie has on overalls and a tank top.

DEBBIE

I can't believe we drove a hundred miles and this was the only clothing store we could find.

RUSTY

Well, it's better than bathing suits.

JAMES

I'm not so sure.

REVEAL that James' T-shirt is emblazoned with the word "SLUT."

KEVIN

I like mine.

We see Kevin's T-shirt reads "Free Moustache Rides."

KEVIN

What is a 'moustache ride'? You think they have one at Walley World?

Debbie and Rusty look at each other awkwardly. Then --

RUSTY

Everyone in the car. We want to get to Aunt Audrey's before dark.

EXT. UPSCALE NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - LATER

The Colossus, looking fairly ghetto with one window covered in plastic and a big scrape down the side, drives down a street lined with palatial homes.

SUPERIMPOSE: (In Korean) Plano, Texas

DEBBIE (O.S.)

This is so embarrassing. We look like your Cousin Eddie's family.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS ACTION

RUSTY

It's no big deal. We'll just explain to them what happened. Remember what happened, kids?

JAMES

We pulled over to rescue a baby from a burning car and someone stole all our stuff while we were distracted.

RUSTY

And what happened to our clothes?

JAMES

I don't remember.

RUSTY

That's right. We don't remember.

DEBBIE

Is that really the best story we can come up with?

RUSTY

Honey, it's perfect. They'll be so focused on the baby and the burning car, they won't even notice that the story falls apart at the end.

Debbie shakes her head dubiously.

GPS VOICE (V.O.)

(outraged)

DANGSIN-EUN MOGJEOGJIE
DOCHAGHAESSEUBNIDA!

RUSTY

Here we are.

EXT. AUDREY AND STONE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

The Griswolds turn into an impressive circular driveway in front of an even more impressive house.

As the family climbs out of the battered car in all their redneck glory, AUDREY and STONE CRANDALL emerge from the house to greet them. Stone, early 40s, is tall, confident and weatherman-handsome. Audrey has grown up to be quite attractive in a Texas-big-hair-and-too-much-jewelry kind of way. She's carrying a baby, COOPER.

AUDREY

Hey, y'all! Welcome!

(then)

What on earth are you wearing?

RUSTY

You won't believe what happened on our way over --

KEVIN

Dad got scammed by two guys at a park.

RUSTY

Kevin!

Stone laughs heartily as he shakes Rusty's hand.

STONE

Same old Rusty. You'd buy water from a faucet.

RUSTY

Not really sure what that --

AUDREY

Well, no worries. We've got plenty of clothes we were gonna give to Goodwill.

DEBBIE

Thanks, Audrey.

(re: the baby)

This must be little Cooper. He's adorable.

AUDREY

Thank you.

STONE

Kevin and James. Would you look at these young men.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEVIN

Hi, Uncle Stone.

STONE

You still wrestling, son?

KEVIN

Uh-huh.

STONE

Let's see some moves.

Kevin grabs James and quickly wrestles him to the ground, pinning him on his back.

JAMES

Get off of me!

STONE

(to Kevin)
Very nice lateral toss.

KEVIN

Thanks.

Stone gives Debbie a kiss on the cheek. Rusty watches the following with some discomfort.

STONE

Debbie Griswold. You just keep getting prettier.

DEBBIE

(charmed)
Stop it.

STONE

I mean it. You could make hot water come out of the cold faucet.

Rusty reacts to this second faucet metaphor as Stone continues staring into Debbie's eyes.

AUDREY

Well, come on in the house. We'll show you around.

They all head inside. James gets to his feet and limps in behind them wearing his "Slut" shirt.

INT. AUDREY AND STONE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Audrey and Stone, walking hand in hand, show the Griswolds through their enormous, slightly gaudy home.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEVIN

Man, this place makes our house
look like shit.

DEBBIE

Kevin!

KEVIN

It does.

STONE

(chuckling)

Well, Kevin, that's only 'cause
the dollar goes much further out
here than it does in Chicago.

(beat)

Especially when you make a lot
more of them.

He gives Rusty a playful wink. Rusty winks back,
annoyed.

They walk into a large entertainment room where a tall,
heavysset African-American boy, DARRYL, 15, sits watching
the news on a 60-inch screen: RIOTERS run through the
streets.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

(on TV)

... the Memphis riots continue to
spread throughout the South
following the stunning revelation
that Elvis Presley, the king of
rock and roll, may have been
homosexual...

Rusty and Debbie exchange a quick look.

AUDREY

Oh, and here's Darryl. Darryl,
say hello to your Uncle Rusty and
his family.

Darryl stands and smiles shyly.

DARRYL

(softly)

Hello, Uncle Rusty. Hello,
everyone.

RUSTY

Uncle? I don't --

AUDREY

Stone and I have adopted Darryl.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

Oh, like *The Blind Side*.

Stone, Audrey and Darryl look at him blankly.

RUSTY

The movie? You've never -- no one's ever brought this up? Okay.

STONE

Darryl's mom works for us as our housekeeper, and they were having some tough times, and we felt taking them in was the Christian thing to do.

DEBBIE

(impressed)

That is so Christian of you.

RUSTY

Well, we did the Lupus Walk in 2007, so...

They all look at him, unmoved.

RUSTY

I'm just saying, that was pretty Christian of us. So...

Stone and Audrey nod politely. Debbie notices a framed photo on a credenza showing Stone and another man.

DEBBIE

Is that Newt Gingrich?!

STONE

Newt's an old friend. I can't tell you how many nights we've spent drinking bourbon together and crying about the state of this country.

AUDREY

It's true. They do. They literally cry together.

DEBBIE

Somehow I can't imagine you crying, Stone.

RUSTY

(chuckling)

Yeah, that's kind of embarrassing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STONE

Not to me. Even the strongest faucet sometimes lets out a few drops.

RUSTY

Again with the faucets.

AUDREY

You guys must be hungry. Let's get you some fresh clothes and then we can eat.

STONE

(to the kids)
Hope you boys like ribs.

EXT. STONE AND AUDREY'S BACKYARD - DUSK

CLOSE ON the biggest SLAB of BEEF RIBS you've ever seen being carried from the house by an AFRICAN-AMERICAN HOUSEKEEPER, DIANA, 40s.

She enters a luxurious, candle-lit gazebo where the Crandalls (including Darryl and Cooper in a high chair) and the Griswolds sit at a table. Stone stands behind Audrey, casually massaging her shoulders. A dazzling Texas sunset spreads across the sky. Debbie, James and Kevin wear expensive-looking casual clothes. Rusty sports one of Stone's cowboy shirts with pearl snaps.

STONE

... now everyone thought that F4 twister was gonna bypass Harris County, but I knew we were looking at a low pressure system moving north out of Galveston, and that sucker was making a beeline for Mission Bend. Thanks to my prediction, those people had a full 15 minutes to evacuate. Governor Perry told me I saved 3,000 lives that day.

(re: the ribs)
Thank you, Diana.

DIANA

You're welcome, Mr. Crandall.

Diana heads back to the house. Stone takes a seat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES

Wow, Uncle Stone. I may not agree with your politics, but that doesn't mean I don't admire you.

STONE

Well, thank you, James. But the man you should admire the most is sitting right next to you.

JAMES

(confused)
Darryl?

STONE

No.

JAMES

(re: the baby)
Cooper?

STONE

Cooper's a baby. I'm talking about your dad.

KEVIN

He doesn't save anybody's life.

STONE

Doesn't he? Every time he flies that little plane of his, he's saving lives by not crashing. Your dad gets people where they need to go. And in my book, that makes him a hero.

RUSTY

(pleasantly surprised)
Thank you.

STONE

Not to mention he snagged himself one sweet slice of foxy pie in your mama there.

DEBBIE

(smitten)
Oh, Stone.
(to Audrey)
He is some charmer, Audrey.

AUDREY

Don't I know it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Audrey and Stone make kissy faces at each other.

RUSTY

(quietly)

I thought we were talking about
me...

Just then, a large STEER sidles up to the fence that runs
near the gazebo.

JAMES

Whoa, there's a cow.

STONE

Not a cow. A steer. That's six
thousand dollars worth of purebred
Angus beef.

AUDREY

Stone's new hobby. Raising
cattle. How many do we have now,
hon?

STONE

A dozen. I figured we've got the
land. Might as well take
advantage of it.

Stone grabs a beef rib from his plate and holds it out to
the steer, who nibbles the meat off the bone.

STONE

This boy loves him some ribs.

Rusty and James look horrified.

JAMES

(sotto)

Dad, isn't that -- ?

RUSTY

(softly)

Cannibalism? Yes.

KEVIN

(to Stone)

Can we tip him over?

STONE

(chuckling)

No, but you remind me of me when I
was your age.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STONE (CONT'D)

(then)

Say, if you boys want to get up early, you can watch me herd these suckers into the corral in the morning.

DEBBIE

You herd them yourself?

STONE

I'm a man, aren't I?

Rusty glances over at Debbie and the boys, who are clearly in awe of Stone.

RUSTY

You need a hand out there tomorrow? I'd love to help.

DEBBIE

Rusty, you don't know how to ride a horse.

STONE

He doesn't need to. This is 2013. We use ATVs.

(then)

Sure, Russ, if you're up for it. I can always use an extra set of hands.

Debbie, James and Kevin look at Rusty, impressed.

RUSTY

I was born with an extra set of hands.

Stone and the others regard this curiously.

STONE

Well, all right. This'll be the highlight of your trip.

AUDREY

(to Rusty)

Speaking of your trip, how come you're going back to Walley World when we had such a bad time there?

RUSTY

Bad time? We had a blast. Don't you remember the Whipper Snapper?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AUDREY

Yeah. Dad took a guy hostage to let us ride it!

RUSTY

Because he loved us, and he wanted us to be close. And we were. That's all I want for my family.

STONE

Well, I think that's real nice. Family is the most important thing there is. Maybe we'll take Cooper on a trip this summer.

Audrey clears her throat and nods pointedly in Darryl's direction.

STONE

(quickly)
And Darryl. Darryl's coming, too.
(to Darryl)
Love you, son.

OFF Darryl's sad smile --

INT. CRANDALL GUEST BEDROOM - LATER

Rusty and Debbie enter and shut the door. Debbie begins to unbutton her borrowed blouse.

DEBBIE

Can you believe they were going to give these clothes to Goodwill? Look at this purse. This is the nicest thing I own now.

RUSTY

They're all right. These jeans Stone gave me are kind of stretched out in the crotch.

DEBBIE

How would jeans get stretched out in the --
(realizing)
Oh.

Rusty sits on the bed to take off his shoes.

RUSTY

How much you think he paid for this hou--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Suddenly, Debbie attacks him, shoving him back onto the bed and kissing him hungrily.

RUSTY

Whoa. Okay. Let me go look for a scented candle.

DEBBIE

Forget the candle. I want you now.

She continues kissing him and YANKS OPEN the snaps on his cowboy shirt.

DEBBIE

You are so sexy.

RUSTY

Wow. What got into you tonight?

All at once, Rusty stops kissing her and a troubled look crosses his face.

DEBBIE

What is it?

RUSTY

This is because of him, isn't it?

DEBBIE

What? Because of who?

RUSTY

Stone. That's why you're jumping my bones. You're thinking of him.

DEBBIE

Rusty, don't be ridiculous.

RUSTY

You're never this excited to have sex with me. Then the one night you're around him, you turn into an animal.

DEBBIE

I don't know where this is --

Rusty's eyes narrow as he grabs hold of her left hand.

RUSTY

Hey! Where's your wedding ring?

She looks down and gasps.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEBBIE

Oh my God. I don't know.

RUSTY

You took it off! You took it off before we got here.

DEBBIE

No, I didn't. It was loose. It must have fallen off somewhere.

RUSTY

(skeptical)

Uh-huh.

(then)

What was the plan, Deb? You show up here without a ring. He'll think you're single?

DEBBIE

How could he think I'm single when I'm with my husband and two kids?

RUSTY

Don't ask me. It was your plan.

DEBBIE

It wasn't my -- Look, I admit Stone is an impressive man. But I married you, Russ. I feel awful about losing that ring. I would never take it off on purpose.

RUSTY

(softening)

We'll get you another ring.

(beat)

Sorry I freaked out.

They get into bed. Rusty switches off his lamp and we STAY ON his face for a beat. He still looks troubled.

ANGLE ON DEBBIE

whose expression is also disquieted. She picks up her book and begins to read.

Gradually, we hear the unmistakable sound of Stone and Audrey HAVING SEX in the next room. It grows more and more AGGRESSIVE and SHRILL.

RUSTY

How can we hear them?! They're like ten rooms away from us.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A framed painting FALLS off the wall nearby.

RUSTY
What is he doing to her?

EXT. CRANDALL GROUNDS - NEXT MORNING

The sun is still rising as Stone prepares two high-end sport ATVs. Rusty comes out of the house, yawning.

STONE
Morning.

RUSTY
Barely. How come you need to do this at 6:00 AM?

STONE
Gotta be at the station by 7:30 for my Doppler 3000 Morning Report.
(re: the ATV)
You ever ride one of these things?

RUSTY
No, but I can't imagine it's more complicated than an Airbus A-318.

STONE
That's the spirit. Now, the key here is to move back and forth along the edge of the herd. Keep your distance, though. You don't want to spook them.

RUSTY
Got it. Um, are there helmets?

STONE
(cracking up)
Sure. I keep 'em with the tampons.

Stone climbs on his ATV and ZOOMS off. Rusty shrugs as he climbs onto the other one. He twists the throttle and hangs on for dear life as it ROCKETS FORWARD.

He and Stone head toward the field where the small herd of cattle are grazing. They begin herding the animals with their ATVs. Rusty looks equal parts thrilled and terrified.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY
(shouting over the
motor)
This is exciting!

STONE
(shouting)
It's my favorite way to start the
day. This and making love to your
sister.

RUSTY
(disgusted)
Thanks for that.

STONE
Aw, come on. You know she's a hot
tamale. You never snuck a peek at
her in the shower when you were
growing up?

RUSTY
No! That's disgusting!

STONE
Yeah. I suppose it is.

They manage to herd most of the steer in the direction of
the corral, but TWO STRAGGLERS remain a short distance
away in the field.

STONE
Looks like we got us a couple of
mavericks. You take the one on
the left, I'll take the one on the
right.
(beat, friendly)
Unless you need my help with
yours...

Just then, Rusty notices that Debbie, James and Kevin
have come out onto the back porch to watch.

RUSTY
(determined)
I think I can handle it.

STONE
(smiling)
Last one to the corral is a rotten
cowpoke.

VROOM! Stone speeds off towards his straggler. Rusty
quickly speeds off in the direction of his.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He glances back over his shoulder to see if Stone has reached his steer. He's not going to lose this challenge in front of his family.

Rusty swerves around a bale of hay and zeroes in on his target, fifty yards away. Hearing the noise from the ATV, the animal begins to run away from him.

RUSTY
(to himself)
Come on, come on...

Rusty twists the throttle to full as his ATV picks up speed, bouncing over the field. The steer continues to flee.

Rusty looks quickly over at Stone who also appears to be having a hard time wrangling his animal. Feeling confident, Rusty turns and waves to Debbie and the boys. They wave back.

Rusty looks ahead again just in time to see his STEER has STOPPED abruptly, and Rusty is BARRELING FULL-SPEED TOWARD ITS FLANK.

Rusty's eyes go wide with terror. It's too late to stop or swerve.

RUSTY
HOLY SH--

ANGLE ON DEBBIE AND THE KIDS

REACTING as we hear a WET EXPLOSION of machine plowing into flesh.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. STONE AND AUDREY'S BACKYARD - MINUTES LATER

As Debbie, Audrey and the kids watch with a mix of embarrassment and disgust, Stone hoses down a dazed Rusty. He is COVERED HEAD-TO-TOE IN BLOOD AND BITS OF MEAT which pool at his feet. He looks like Carrie at the prom.

RUSTY
(shell-shocked)
I... I drove through an animal.

He SNEEZES and more blood sprays out of his nose.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEBBIE

Are you okay?!

STONE

(grim)

It's not his blood.

A steer ambles up and begins nibbling a chunk of beef at Rusty's feet.

RUSTY

(recoiling)

Ugh! Stop it!

EXT. AUDREY AND STONE'S HOUSE - LATER

Stone and Audrey (holding Cooper) wave goodbye as the Griswolds pull away in the Colossus. From a window inside, Darryl somberly watches them go.

INT. CAR - DAY

The Griswolds drive in silence. Rusty still seems shaken by their stay at the Crandalls'.

KEVIN

(mischievously)

Hey, Dad. Can we stop for burgers?

Rusty grimaces.

RUSTY

No. No burgers.

JAMES

(grinning)

What about roast beef?

Debbie catches on to what the kids are doing.

DEBBIE

I bet your father could find a roast beef drive-thru.

She and the boys laugh. Rusty can't help but crack a smile.

RUSTY

Okay, very funny. Dad killed a cow. Can we please just moooooove on?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They all laugh.

RUSTY

All right, guys. I know things haven't gone totally according to plan, but we've only got two days till we get to Walley World, so let's try and make the most of the time we have left.

JAMES

Look!

He points out the front window where a highway sign reads "Historic Route 66."

JAMES

(giddy)
Route 66! Kerouac's 'mother road'! The Beatnik blood vessel through the heart of the American West.

Kevin punches him in the crotch.

JAMES

(doubling over)
Ow!

KEVIN

Don't talk like that.

RUSTY

Kevin!

JAMES

(to Kevin)
You know, you may be able to hurt my body, but you'll never hurt my mind.

KEVIN

Oh yeah?

Kevin punches James in the forehead.

JAMES

(grabbing his head)
Ow! My mind!

DISSOLVE TO:

SERIES OF TRAVELLING SHOTS

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-- AERIAL SHOT of the Colossus heading into the New Mexico desert with dramatic ROCK FORMATIONS in the distance.

-- The Griswolds drive past the CADILLAC RANCH: a roadside attraction featuring a line of half-buried vertical Cadillacs.

-- They pass through Roswell, NM, where an Arby's restaurant sign reads "Aliens Welcome."

-- The car speeds past a sun-faded fiberglass T-REX on the side of the road at DINOSAUR LAND.

EXT. WIGWAM MOTEL - NIGHT

In Korean:

SUPERIMPOSE: HOLBROOK, ARIZONA

The Colossus is parked outside an enormous faux WIGWAM, one of several that make up this cheesy desert motel.

RUSTY (V.O.)
(whispering)
Deb?

INT. WIGWAM MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS ACTION

The boys are asleep in one double bed while Rusty and Debbie lie in another.

DEBBIE
(waking up)
What's wrong?

RUSTY
Nothing. I have an idea. It's gonna sound a little crazy, but hear me out.

DEBBIE
Okay.

RUSTY
We're right near the Four Corners monument where four states meet in one spot.

DEBBIE
So?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

Let's go have sex on it!

DEBBIE

What?!

RUSTY

That way we can make love in four states at the same time.

DEBBIE

Are you serious?

RUSTY

C'mon, you're the one who said we've gotten boring. What's less boring than sex on a monument?

DEBBIE

This isn't really what I had in mind, Russ.

RUSTY

'Debbie Do-Anything' would do it.

DEBBIE

'Debbie Do-Anything' was an idiot.

RUSTY

Maybe being idiots is exactly what the doctor ordered.

DEBBIE

What about the kids?

RUSTY

They're fast asleep. We'll be back before they know we were gone.

Debbie takes a deep breath. Finally, she grins.

DEBBIE

Oh, what the hell. Come on.

Like a couple of teenagers, they grab their clothes and tiptoe out of the room. Rusty slaps her on the butt as they go.

EXT. FOUR CORNERS MONUMENT ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Illuminated by the nearly full moon, Rusty and Debbie quietly climb out of the Colossus.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

By now Debbie is fully on-board, while Rusty is starting to have his doubts.

RUSTY

Did you hear a coyote?

DEBBIE

Uh-huh.

They approach a chain-link fence that encloses the monument.

RUSTY

Oh no. There's a fence.

(turning back)

Well, we gave it a shot.

DEBBIE

Come on, scaredy-cat. Give me a boost.

RUSTY

I think this might be federal land --

DEBBIE

Just cup your hands.

He cups his hands and Debbie boosts herself up onto the fence. She clambers over and, with some difficulty, Rusty follows.

DEBBIE

Just pretend it's a stripper pole.

RUSTY

Very funny -- OW!

His pant leg has gotten snagged on the top of the fence. He struggles to get free, finally tumbling awkwardly to the ground.

DEBBIE

You okay?

RUSTY

(in pain)

Fine.

INT. WIGWAM MOTEL ROOM - SAME TIME

James wakes up and notices the empty bed beside his.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES
 (whispering)
 Mom? Dad?

EXT. WIGWAM MOTEL - MOMENTS LATER

James emerges from the wigwam room wearing shorts and a T-shirt. He looks around curiously.

FEMALE (O.S.)
 James?

JAMES
 Mom?

He turns and reacts as he sees Adena, the cute girl from the earlier motel. She is sitting on a picnic table beside a crackling fire in a fire ring.

JAMES
 Adena?!

ADENA
 Looks like you guys are doing the same tour of America's crappiest motels as us.

He joins her at the table.

JAMES
 I don't believe it. How... uh, how's it going?

ADENA
 Good. Just checking out these awesome stars. I can see why the Indians picked this spot to build their giant fiberglass wigwams.

JAMES
 (chuckling)
 Yeah. I didn't even know they had free HBO back then.

ADENA
 No guitar tonight?

JAMES
 It got stolen by some hillbillies while I was swimming in a cesspool.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ADENA

Been there.

(then)

It's a shame you lost the guitar.
I liked hearing you play.

JAMES

You did?

ADENA

I've always had a thing for
musicians.

JAMES

(nervous)

Well, I've always had a thing
for... pretty... girls.

ADENA

(grins)

Well played.

They both look up at the night sky as she snuggles slightly closer to him. James can't believe his luck.

EXT. FOUR CORNERS MONUMENT - SAME TIME

Rusty and Debbie make their way in the dark toward the monument site (a flat, raised circle with the four corners etched in its center).

DEBBIE

There it is.

RUSTY

Oh, good. It's hard to walk with
this erection.

Debbie giggles. They quietly step up onto the monument and lie down in the darkness.

RUSTY

(whispering)

I can't see a thing.

DEBBIE

See with your hands.

Rusty feels around.

RUSTY

There you are. Mmm. Can't
believe we're doing this in four
states right now.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY (CONT'D)

(then)
Deb?

DEBBIE

Yeah?

RUSTY

Your boob feels a little... hairy.

DEBBIE

What?

RUSTY

Yeah. Uh-oh. I think you've got a lump. Wait, two lumps!

DEBBIE

You're not even touching my boob!

RUSTY

Then what's in my hand?

MAN WITH DEEP VOICE (O.S.)

Those'd be my balls.

RUSTY/DEBBIE

AHHHHHH!

Rusty and Debbie leap to their feet as a flashlight beam shines on them from the darkness, revealing they were lying next to a NAKED, MIDDLE-AGED COUPLE having sex on the monument.

RUSTY

Oh, God!

DEBBIE

Ew!

RUSTY

(to the Man)
Why didn't you say something?!

MAN WITH DEEP VOICE

I wanted to see where you were going with it.

A HUSKY 50-something WOMAN holding the flashlight stands beside her shriveled, BALDING BOYFRIEND, 60s.

HUSKY LADY

(gravelly voice)
If y'all are here to have sex on the Corners, we're next. Get in line.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Rusty backs up and bumps into ANOTHER MAN who is in his underwear. He turns and walks into a WOMAN in a bra and cowboy hat. With only the light from the flashlight, it's like a scene from *Paranormal Activity*.

Rusty and Debbie realize there are nearly a DOZEN PEOPLE waiting in line for their turn.

DEBBIE
(grossed out)
So many of them.

RUSTY
Guess I wasn't the first person to
have this idea.

MAN WITH DEEP VOICE (O.S.)
Unnnhhh! I just shot all over
four states!

Rusty and Debbie hurry away.

EXT. WIGWAM MOTEL - SAME TIME

James and Adena are as we left them.

JAMES
You really can see all the stars
out here.

ADENA
Yeah.
(then)
So, what do you feel like doing?

JAMES
Um, I don't know. Look at the
stars some more?

Adena looks at him. There's a beat.

JAMES
(softly)
Do you want to make out?

ADENA
Okay.

There's another beat. James takes a deep breath, then leans in and kisses her. It's his first kiss and it's glorious. Suddenly, he is STRUCK in the back of the head with a small rock.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES

Ow!

He turns to see Kevin, in his underwear, laughing from a few yards away.

KEVIN

Where's Mom and Dad, dickless?

JAMES

I don't know! Just go back inside!

KEVIN

(to Adena)
You were actually letting that dork kiss you?

JAMES

Shut up!

ADENA

Who is that?!

JAMES

My stupid brother.

ADENA

I thought you said he was your big brother.

JAMES

No, he's ten.

Kevin hurls another stone at James.

JAMES

Damn it!

ADENA

Why do you take that from him?

JAMES

'Cause he's a bully.

ADENA

But you're like a foot taller than him. You could kick his ass. I could kick his ass.

There's a beat as this registers for James.

JAMES

I never thought of it that way.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

With a determined look we haven't seen before, James stands and walks over to Kevin. Accustomed to his brother being a wimp, Kevin stands his ground.

KEVIN

Oh, you want to do this now?
Bring it, bitch.

Without warning, James winds back and SMACKS Kevin across the face, stunning the smaller boy. Kevin's jaw drops. He doesn't know how to react.

James SQUEALS as he LEAPS on top of Kevin, tackling him to the ground and pinning him with his weight.

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

A visibly frustrated Rusty stands at a gas pump filling the Colossus while Debbie buys a soda in the convenience store.

RUSTY

(muttering to
himself)

Stupid Four Corners. More like...
Whore Corners.

As the counter on the pump passes the \$100 mark, he glances over at a row of 18-wheelers parked in a row on the other side of the parking lot.

Rusty's eyes narrow as he spots a familiar TEDDY BEAR tied to the grill of one of the trucks.

RUSTY

Wait a minute...

Suddenly, the HEADLIGHTS of that truck SWITCH ON and Rusty hears its ENGINE COME TO LIFE.

RUSTY

No.

As the truck slowly pulls out of its parking spot, Rusty yanks out the gasoline hose and BOLTS over to the convenience store. He BANGS on the window.

RUSTY

Debbie! Come on!

Debbie looks over, confused.

DEBBIE

What are you -- ?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Rusty points to the Teddy Bear truck which is gradually picking up speed as it heads across the lot toward the Colossus. Debbie drops her soda can and runs out.

DEBBIE
How did he find us?!

RUSTY
I don't know! Just hurry!

They race to the car and jump in.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Rusty fumbles clumsily with the car key as the truck's HEADLIGHTS LOOM CLOSER in the rear window.

DEBBIE
Come on, come on!

RUSTY
I'm trying!

At last he manages to start the car and they PEEL OUT with the truck close on their tail.

EXT. WIGWAM MOTEL - NIGHT

Adena watches uncomfortably as James TOSSES Kevin around the picnic area like a sack of potatoes. They are both sweaty and out of breath.

JAMES
You like that?!
(then)
God, I thought words were the strongest weapons, but fists are so much better!

Kevin is exhausted and for the first time, he acts his age.

KEVIN
(teary-eyed)
Stop it! I'm telling Dad!

JAMES
(mocking)
'I'm telling Dad.' You're such a milquetoast.

He pounces on Kevin and slaps him a few more times.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEVIN

Okay, okay, you win! What do you want from me?!

JAMES

I want you to apologize for embarrassing me in front of my girlfriend.

ADENA

Whoa. Girlfriend?

JAMES

(backtracking)
Uh, no, I didn't mean girlfriend.

ADENA

We just met.

JAMES

Yeah, I know. Totally.

There's an awkward beat. James slaps Kevin again.

KEVIN

Ow!

ADENA

Y'know what? I'm gonna go. You guys are kind of freaking me out.

JAMES

What about the stars -- ?

ADENA

I'll see you around, James.

She heads off to her wigwam.

JAMES

(calling after)
Sorry!

She's gone. James lets out a bittersweet sigh.

KEVIN

Can you get off me, please?

JAMES

(getting up)
Yeah.

He puts out his hand. Kevin tentatively takes it and James helps him up off the ground. They head back to their room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Suddenly, James raises his fist as if he's going to punch Kevin again. Kevin recoils in fear. James puts down his fist and smiles happily to himself.

EXT. DESERT ROAD - CONTINUOUS ACTION

The Colossus FLIES down the dark two-lane highway with the 18-wheeler about 50 yards behind.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS ACTION

DEBBIE

What are we going to do, Russ?
There are no exits!

RUSTY

I have an idea. If I do a 180 we
can drive right past him.

DEBBIE

How?

RUSTY

It's called a 'handbrake turn.'

DEBBIE

You know how to do that?

RUSTY

No, but I've seen Vin Diesel do
it. Hold on tight.

Rusty YANKS UP THE EMERGENCY BRAKE and spins the steering wheel sharply to the left.

EXT. DESERT ROAD - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Instead of whipping around in the opposite direction, the car simply SCREECHES TO A HALT.

DEBBIE (O.S.)

What happened?! Why are we
stopped?

RUSTY (O.S.)

I don't know! I must've done it
wrong!

The truck is now barrelling towards them, its brakes
SQUEALING.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Rusty does a panicked TURN and FLOORS IT, narrowly escaping a collision with the truck but TEARING OFF THE HIGHWAY AND DOWN INTO THE GRAVEL SHOULDER. The Colossus bounces and shudders as Rusty tries to steer back onto the road without slowing down. The windshield is pelted with ROCKS and CACTI.

DEBBIE (O.S.)

Rusty, look out for the --

The car plows into a road sign that reads "DO NOT PASS." The sign is knocked off its pole and gets wedged in the front grill of the Colossus.

Finally, Rusty manages to steer the battered SUV onto the highway. Bits of cactus and tumbleweeds drag from the rear bumper.

INT. WIGWAM MOTEL ROOM - LATER

Looking thoroughly frazzled, Rusty and Debbie tiptoe into the room. The boys appear to be asleep in their bed.

RUSTY

(whispering)

See? They never woke up.

ANGLE ON JAMES

lying awake in bed, looking like a new man. PAN OVER to reveal Kevin sleeping in the fetal position as far from James as he can get.

EXT. GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK - NEXT DAY

The Griswolds' car drives along the rim road of the breathtaking canyon. REVEAL that the "DO NOT PASS" sign is still wedged in the grill, bent so that it now reads: "ASS."

RUSTY (O.S.)

There it is, guys. The Grand Canyon. Last stop before Walley World.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Everyone looks a bit weary from the accumulated stress of the trip.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

Now, when I was here as a kid, we barely stopped long enough to look at it. It's gonna be a little bit different this time.

They drive into a small turnoff beneath a sign that reads "Grand Canyon White Water Adventures." The boys perk up.

KEVIN/JAMES

Cool./Awesome.

EXT. WHITE WATER RAFTING OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

As Rusty and the family approach the log cabin office, a chipper, all-American guide, CHAD, mid-20s, steps out to greet them.

CHAD

Hey, folks!
 (off clipboard)
 You must be the Fungs.
 (off their confusion)
 Just messing. You're the
 Griswolds, right?

RUSTY

That's right.

CHAD

(laughing, re:
 Kevin)
 The little guy was like 'Fungs?
 Huh?!' Anyway, I'm Chad. I'll be
 your guide.

DEBBIE

Hi, Chad.

CHAD

You guys couldn't have come on a better day. The river is running way high so we should be in for a sweet ride. Let's get you geared up!

EXT. RIVERBANK - SHORT TIME LATER

The Griswolds, now wearing helmets and life jackets, stand beside the raft while Chad gives them his pre-trip talk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAD

Just want to go over a few safety precautions before we hit the water. First, I hope one of you knows this river because it's my first time.

(then)

I'm just kidding, guys. Been doing this three years. I know this puppy inside and out. Got my guide certificate from a Cracker Jack box.

(then)

That's a joke.

(re: Kevin)

The little guy's face was like 'what?!'

ANGLE ON KEVIN

who shrugs, confused.

CHAD

Anyway, all you gotta do is follow my instructions and we've got a 50/50 chance of coming back alive.

(quickly)

I'm kidding. Did you see the little dude's face? He was like 'Mommy, get me out of here.'

Okay, everyone in the --

SFX: Cell phone rings

Chad fishes his phone out of his cargo shorts and checks the caller ID.

CHAD

Oops. It's my fiancée. We got engaged last week. Better take this or the river won't be the only hot water I'm in today.

(then)

River's actually pretty cold. Be right with you.

(into phone)

Hey, baby.

He moves off a few paces to talk.

JAMES

This is awesome. We're about to set sail through one of America's greatest aquatic treasures.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY
 (reflexively)
 Kevin, don't hit your brother!

KEVIN
 (small)
 I didn't.

DEBBIE
 You heard what he said, didn't
 you?

KEVIN
 Yeah.

Debbie and Rusty exchange a look of pleasant surprise.
 James smiles to himself.

CHAD
 (into phone)
 ... I don't understand. So what
 are you saying?

The Griswolds notice that Chad is becoming agitated.

CHAD
 Just like that?
 (beat)
 But I love you and you love me.
 Isn't that all that matters?
 What?! No, no, no. Don't do this
 to me. You're all I have, baby --
 Hello? Tanya? TANYA?! GOD DAMN
 IT!!

Enraged, Chad HURLS his phone into the river and buries
 his face in his hands. As Rusty and the family watch
 with concern, Chad lets out a DEEP, DISTURBING SIGH,
 composes himself and returns to them.

CHAD
 (as if nothing
 happened)
 You guys ready to do this?

DEBBIE
 Are you all right, Chad?

CHAD
 (fragile)
 Oh, yeah. Looks like I'm not
 engaged anymore, so... what is
 there to live for?

He laughs bitterly, then steps into the raft.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAD

All aboard!

DEBBIE

(sotto, to Rusty)

Is this another joke?

RUSTY

(sotto)

I'm not sure.

With some trepidation, the Griswolds climb into the raft and Chad pushes off from the bank.

EXT. COLORADO RIVER - MOMENTS LATER

The raft moves swiftly downriver as the calm water gives way to small rapids. The Griswolds paddle, not sure what they're supposed to be doing. Behind them, Chad stares distractedly into space.

RUSTY

Uh, Chad? Should we be doing anything in particular?

CHAD

Huh? Nah, it's all good.

The raft hits a ROCK, bouncing them all backwards. Kevin flies in the air. His helmet falls off and lands in the river.

KEVIN

Whoa!

DEBBIE

(to Rusty)

Shouldn't Chad be steering us?

RUSTY

I would think so.

They SLAM into a submerged LOG. James and Kevin get soaked.

CHAD

(oblivious)

Looks like my mom was right about Tanya. She was too good for me.

RUSTY

I'm sure you'll find someone else --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAD
(crazy cheerful)
Oh, are you sure of that?! Okay,
awesome. Thanks, dude who doesn't
know anything about me!

The raft approaches a fork in the river: one way is calm, the other a seething path of white water. With a furious grin, Chad steers toward the rapids.

JAMES
Uh, Dad? This looks kind of
rough.

RUSTY
Yeah, Chad, did you mean to --

He turns to see Chad is leaning over the side of the raft, his head submerged in the river.

RUSTY
What the...? Hey!

He yanks Chad back in the raft.

CHAD
(coughing up water)
What is it?

By now, the rapids have become violent and the raft is being tossed from side-to-side.

DEBBIE
Okay, this is ridiculous!

RUSTY
Yeah, Chad, I think we've had
about enough.

CHAD
Me, too.

Without warning, Chad tosses his paddle into the river where it is swept away in the rapids.

RUSTY
Why did you do that?!

CHAD
What's the point of steering when
we're just gonna go over that?

He points straight ahead, and we PULL BACK to see a 25-FOOT WATERFALL directly in their path.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY
(horrified)
Everyone out of the raft!

The Griswolds scramble out of the raft and into the churning white water, where they manage to grab hold of a large tree trunk in the midst of the rapids.

Chad and the raft are carried off by the current.

CHAD
Thanks for choosing Grand Canyon
White Water Adventures!

Suddenly, James notices that Kevin has lost his grip on the log and is being pulled downriver.

JAMES
Kevin!

KEVIN
(struggling)
Help!

Without thinking of his own safety, James quickly reaches out for Kevin. He just barely grabs hold of Kevin's HAIR with one hand, while anchoring himself to the log with the other.

KEVIN
OWWW! My hair!

JAMES
I've got you.

Using all his strength against the powerful current, James tugs Kevin back to safety by his hair, as Chad and the raft reach the edge of the falls.

CHAD
Little dude's face is like 'Ow!
My hairrrrrr!'

Chad disappears over the edge.

INT. CAR - LATER

Looking damp, exhausted and thoroughly fed up with travelling, the family is back on the road. Kevin now sports a BALD SPOT from James' rescue. A local radio station plays the end of a song.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOCAL DJ (V.O.)

That was 'Heavy Things' by Phish,
who incidentally, are in town for
this weekend's eighth annual
Desert Fest. This year's theme is
'Save the Earth.' Same as last
year's --

Rusty changes to another station and gasps as he hears
the familiar chorus of --

MUSIC CUE: "Fast Car" by Tracy Chapman.

RUSTY

Oh my God. That's got to be a
sign. Sing it with me!

(singing)

*'Remember we were driving driving
in your car/The speed so fast I
felt like I was drunk --'*

As before, no one looks at all interested in singing
along.

RUSTY

Come on, guys. I know we've been
through a lot on this trip, but at
least we still have each other,
right? Let's sing it...

The music begins to crackle as the sound is slowly
overwhelmed by static.

DEBBIE

We're losing the station, Russ.

RUSTY

(desperate)

No! We haven't lost it yet.
We've just got to listen a little
harder.

(singing)

*'And I... I... I... had a feeling
that I belonged/And I... I... I...
had a feeling I could...'*

The song has disappeared into the static. Debbie
switches off the radio.

DEBBIE

It's gone, honey.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY
 (bitterly)
 I just thought we could all sing
 it together.

SFX: A PINGING sound from the car.

RUSTY
 Oh, that's great. We're out of
 gas. Again.

Rusty looks like he's about to blow a fuse. He spots an exit up ahead and takes a deep breath.

RUSTY
 (forced upbeat)
 Well, I'll bet there's someplace
 to fill up here.

EXT. HIGHWAY OFFRAMP - CONTINUOUS ACTION

The Colossus exits the highway, passing a homemade banner reading "Desert Fest 2012 -- Earth Lovers Only!"

EXT. DESERT ROAD - MINUTES LATER

The car heads down a dusty road lined with tents, bicycles, falafel stands and hundreds of HIPPIY-LOOKING TYPES making their way to a nearby stage where a BAND is playing.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS ACTION

DEBBIE
 I don't see a station, Russ.

JAMES
 (pointing)
 There's a guy with a gas can.

EXT. DESERT ROAD - ANGLE ON A BEARDED DUDE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

pouring gasoline on a straw-filled EFFIGY of a businessman wearing a sign that reads "BIG OIL." Another guy throws a match, setting it alight and dozens of FESTIVAL-GOERS cheer.

A few PEOPLE scowl at the enormous gas-guzzling Colossus with an "ASS" sign on the front.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS ACTION

With a final SPUTTER and plume of exhaust, the car runs out of gas and comes to a halt near a large manmade MUD PIT in which a number of HALF-NUDE EARTH LOVERS squirm.

RUSTY

Damn. Well, hopefully someone around here can spare a couple gallons.

They all exit the car. Debbie takes her purse. Kevin gapes at the nudists in the mud, until Debbie yanks him away.

EXT. DESERT - MOMENTS LATER

The Griswolds walk a few yards into the crowd. Rusty approaches a skinny STONED GUY who repeatedly runs his hands over his arms and torso.

RUSTY

Excuse me, sir? I wonder if you have any idea where I might find some gasoline?

STONED GUY

Touch my arm.

RUSTY

I'm sorry?

STONED GUY

It feels alive. Like I'm made out of wind.

RUSTY

So... no idea about the gas then?

STONED GUY

I have brown rice. In my tent.

RUSTY

(looking around)
Anyone else I can talk to?

Suddenly, they hear GLASS BREAKING and SHOUTING. They turn to see a MOB of Desert Fest HIPPIES have surrounded the Colossus and are ROCKING IT back and forth violently.

HIPPIES

(chanting)
S.U.V., R.I.P.! S.U.V., R.I.P.!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEBBIE

Russ?

RUSTY

What are they --

(yelling)

Hey! Stop that! It's gonna --

All at once, the car TIPS OVER AND ROLLS ONTO ITS SIDE. From inside, we can hear the GPS VOICE YELLING OUT a stream of angry pronouncements in Korean.

GPS VOICE (V.O.)

MOGSOLINEUN-I BOLLYUM-EISS-EUL
GEOYEYO!!!!

Rusty runs over as another GUY begins pouring gasoline onto the Colossus.

RUSTY

What is wrong with you people?!

That's a rental!

Rusty SLIPS on a patch of mud and FLOPS face-first into the giant MUD BATH.

HIPPIE CHICK

Let's burn this gas-guzzling
monster! We're gonna need a lot
of gas!

Rusty flails around, finally emerging covered in mud. He wipes the muck from his eyes, just in time to see the HIPPIES CHEER as the car GOES UP IN FLAMES.

RUSTY

(getting to his feet)

No, no, no!

DEBBIE

What are we going to do now?!

Rusty grits his teeth, trying to keep his cool.

RUSTY

Okay. Okay, we can handle this.

DEBBIE

(exasperated)

We can't handle this, Russ! This trip has been a disaster from the start. We would've been better off at the cabin in Cheboygan!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEVIN

I knew this vacation would suck balls! I didn't even want to come on this stupid trip!

JAMES

I'm actually glad we did this. All the best writers had horrible childhoods.

RUSTY

Come on, guys, all we need to do is...

He stops when he sees the faces of his exhausted, miserable family. At last, Rusty's eternal optimism has reached its limit.

RUSTY

FUCK ME! I don't know! I give up! All I wanted was to take my goddamn family on a goddamn trip to Walley World and ride the goddamn Whipper Snapper!

In a fit of rage, Rusty PUNCHES a nearby CACTUS, immediately pulling his hand away in pain.

RUSTY

OW! I guess I'm the asshole for wanting to show this family a good time! And what do I get? Kids who hate me, a wife who's bored of me --

DEBBIE

Russ --

RUSTY

Come on, Debbie. It's true. You think I'm just a lame, regional pilot. A glorified bus driver. Well, guess what? I get offers from international carriers all the time! But I turn them down, because I don't want to be away from you and the kids for that long!

Debbie reacts to this revelation.

RUSTY

But I guess I should've taken those jobs and flown off to the beaches of...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY (CONT'D)

Zambia, and the mountains of...
 England! You know what? Forget
 Walley World! Forget this whole
 stupid trip. I'm finished! You
 people are on your own! Maybe
 you'll find a new husband and
 father you actually like! One
 with a huge penis who can take you
 to Europe and wrestling and...
 books!

He turns and begins to march off down the road.

DEBBIE

Where are you going?

RUSTY

I don't know!

The skinny Stoned Guy from before walks into Rusty's path. Rusty shoves him aside.

STONED GUY

Not cool.

Rusty gets about 100 feet, muttering angrily to himself, when he looks up and notices something approaching in the distance. Through the rippling heat waves, he can make out a TRUCK speeding towards him, sending up a cloud of dust in its wake.

RUSTY

What the...?

As it gets closer, WE SUDDENLY ZOOM IN TO the truck's grill where a bug-splattered TEDDY BEAR is tethered.

RUSTY

Oh no.
 (almost a whisper)
 Help.
 (louder)
 Help.

He turns and begins to run madly into the desert away from the oncoming 18-wheeler.

RUSTY

HELP!

The truck quickly closes the gap, slowing down to match Rusty's speed about 10 feet behind him.

RUSTY

Somebody help me!

ANGLE ON DEBBIE AND THE KIDS

watching with trepidation as Rusty tries fruitlessly to outrun the slow-moving monster a few feet behind him.

ANOTHER ANGLE

At last, Rusty can't run any farther. Gasping for breath, he stops and turns toward the truck, a look of sheer terror in his eyes.

With a SQUEAL of air brakes, the truck comes to a dusty halt. After a few excruciating seconds, the driver's door opens and out steps the BIGGEST, MOST GRIZZLED, BEARDED TRUCKER in history. Rusty lets out a little gasp as the driver walks slowly towards him.

We see Debbie and the boys running over to them.

DEBBIE

Don't you hurt him!

RUSTY

(to Trucker)

I... here's the... boy, you just keep getting bigger with every step...

The Trucker reaches into his pocket. Debbie is almost there.

DEBBIE

NO!

RUSTY

(to Trucker,
flinching)

Not in front of my family.

The Trucker fishes something out and offers it to Rusty.

TRUCKER

You dropped this at the truck stop in Missouri. Figured you'd want it back.

Debbie arrives just in time to see that the Trucker is holding out her LOST WEDDING RING.

RUSTY

(stunned)

Oh my God.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEBBIE

Is that my -- ?

RUSTY

This man's been trying to return
it to us the whole time.

Rusty takes the ring from the Trucker.

RUSTY

(to Trucker)

I don't know how to thank you.

TRUCKER

No thanks needed. It was on my
way.

KEVIN

So, you're not a rapist?

JAMES

Shut up, Kevin!

Kevin looks cowed. The Trucker smiles and musses Kevin's
hair.

TRUCKER

Not anymore.

(noticing the still
burning Colossus)

Looks like you all could use a
ride. Which way are you headed?

DEBBIE

Well, we were going to Walley
World.

TRUCKER

I can take you as far as San
Francisco.

The Griswolds exchange a look.

RUSTY

(with resignation)

That'll work.

They all climb into the truck's cab.

EXT. GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE - LATER

FROM ABOVE, we see the 18-wheeler crossing the bridge.

EXT. CASTRO DISTRICT, SAN FRANCISCO - EVENING

The truck drives through the predominantly gay neighborhood. We see rainbow flags, a MUSCULAR MAN walking a tiny dog, etc.

EXT. CASTRO DISTRICT STREET - MINUTES LATER

The truck pulls to a stop outside a two-story bungalow and the Griswolds get out.

DEBBIE
 (to the Trucker)
 Thanks again, Josh. Hope your mom
 feels better.

TRUCKER
 You all take care now. And, Deb,
 I'm gonna try that Moroccan slaw
 recipe.

The truck pulls away. The Griswolds turn and approach the house. Rusty rings the doorbell then turns to Debbie.

DEBBIE
 So this is where the trip ends.

RUSTY
 We'll get a flight home tomorrow.

After a beat, the door opens, revealing CLARK GRISWOLD.

RUSTY
 Hi, Dad.

CLARK
 I don't believe it! Ellen, get
 out here!

As Rusty, Debbie and the kids AD LIB greetings and hug, ELLEN GRISWOLD appears at the door.

ELLEN
 What are you guys doing here?!

RUSTY
 Long story.

CLARK
 Well, come on in! You can tell us
 all about it.
 (then, to the boys)
 Get over here, you two!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Clark attempts to pick up both Kevin and James in his arms. It's obviously a struggle.

CLARK
(gritted teeth)
Boy, you guys are getting big.

With great difficulty, he manages to carry both boys over the threshold.

JAMES
Grandpa, you don't have to --

CLARK
(strained)
No, I got ya.

They all go inside.

INT. CLARK AND ELLEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

The family enters, followed by Clark lugging his grandsons.

CLARK
Here we are...

Kevin has slid down Clark's arm to where he is hanging by his neck and starting to turn blue.

JAMES
I don't think Kevin can breathe.

CLARK
Okay, everybody off the Grandpa Express!

He releases the kids. Kevin falls to the floor, gasping for air. Clark mops his brow from the exertion.

DEBBIE
I love the new place, Ellen.

ELLEN
Thanks. If we'd known you were coming I would've cleaned up.

RUSTY
The neighborhood is a little...

CLARK
Gay? Yup. Very gay. Funny thing is, we didn't know when we bought the place.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

You didn't know the Castro
District was gay?

ELLEN

We thought it was just full of
hip, young bachelors.

CLARK

Turns out, they were hip, young
bachelors who make love to each
other. But you know what?
They've totally embraced us.

ELLEN

They call us 'breeders.' Isn't
that cute?

DEBBIE

Adorable.

CLARK

Anyway, who's hungry?

INT. CLARK AND ELLEN'S DINING ROOM - LATER

The Griswolds sit around the dining table having finished
dinner.

RUSTY

... and that's when the mob of
hippies set our car on fire. But
it didn't really matter because
our luggage and all our stuff had
already been stolen.

JAMES

They even took my guitar.

ELLEN

Oh, James. That's terrible.

CLARK

A musician without his instrument
is like a murderer without his
murder weapon. Give me one
second. I might have just the
thing for you.

He crosses to a drawer in the next room and returns with
a harmonica that he hands to James.

CLARK

Here you go.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES

A harmonica?

CLARK

I know it's not a guitar, but it is a pretty special harmonica. It was given to me by Bob Dillon.

JAMES

Whoa! The Bob Dylan?

CLARK

Nope. A Bob Dillon. D-I-L-L-O-N. Accountant friend of mine.

JAMES

(disappointed)

Oh.

CLARK

But Bob got it from Bruce Springstein.

JAMES

The Bruce Springsteen?

CLARK

Nope.

DEBBIE

Boys, why don't you go get ready for bed. It's late.

RUSTY

I'll take them up.

Rusty, James and Kevin head out.

ELLEN

It sounds like you guys had a real adventure.

DEBBIE

'Adventure' is one word for it.

CLARK

How's Audrey doing?

DEBBIE

She seems very happy. Stone Crandall is quite the husband, huh?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLARK

(snorts)

He's a piece of work all right.

DEBBIE

You don't like him?

CLARK

It's hard to like a man who cheats
on your daughter.

DEBBIE

What?!

ELLEN

You didn't know?

CLARK

He sleeps around. He's been
cheating on Audrey for years.
Didn't you meet Daryl?

DEBBIE

The boy he took in?

CLARK

Took in? That's his son. Stone
slept with the housekeeper.

Debbie is floored by this.

DEBBIE

Does Audrey know?

ELLEN

She knows. She's always known.
She puts up with it because she
likes the life he gives her.

CLARK

That's the trouble with marrying
the 'perfect man.' He can have
any woman he wants. And he does.

Debbie looks shaken.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM - SHORT TIME LATER

Rusty sits on the bed to take off his shoes. As he does,
DEBBIE'S PURSE -- the only surviving item from the
Colossus -- FALLS OFF the corner of the bed and her copy
of *The Help* slides out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Rusty reaches for it but THE DUST JACKET SLIPS OFF revealing IT'S NOT *THE HELP* AT ALL. Debbie has been reading a book titled *SAVE YOUR DYING MARRIAGE*.

Stunned, Rusty starts to flip through the book as Debbie enters.

DEBBIE

Russ, I need to --

She stops when she sees what he's holding.

RUSTY

(quietly)

I knew we had some problems but is it this bad?

DEBBIE

Honey --

RUSTY

Is our marriage dying?

DEBBIE

No. A marriage only dies when you stop trying. And you've never stopped trying. I'm the one who did.

RUSTY

What do you mean?

DEBBIE

I've only been thinking about me. How I want to be romanced and taken on exotic trips.

RUSTY

There's nothing wrong with that. You should be romanced. It was ridiculous to think I could make us all closer by locking us in a car for a week.

DEBBIE

But you were doing it for us. You've been trying so hard to make this trip fun and memorable for me and the kids and all I've done is complain.

RUSTY

You had every right. I've put you through some serious shit.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY (CONT'D)

(then)

You deserve to be treated like a queen. The way Stone Crandall treats my sister.

DEBBIE

Rusty, listen to me. You are ten times the man Stone Crandall is. You think he would sacrifice his career for his family like you have?

RUSTY

I didn't sacrifice anything. I have everything I've ever wanted.

Moved, Debbie takes the marriage book from him and drops it in a trash can. Rusty smiles. He remembers something. He reaches into his pocket and takes out HER WEDDING RING.

RUSTY

Debbie, will you continue to be my wife?

DEBBIE

I will.

He slips the ring on her finger.

DEBBIE

I was wondering when you were going to give that back.

They kiss and fall onto the bed.

RUSTY

Oh, wait. I almost forgot...

He gets up and pulls the familiar SADE CD out of his jacket pocket. He holds it up to Debbie who tries to hide her disappointment. Then suddenly, Rusty SNAPS THE CD IN TWO and tosses the pieces in the trash.

Debbie grins as Rusty yanks off his shirt and LEAPS onto the bed.

INT. CLARK AND ELLEN'S BEDROOM - MINUTES LATER

Clark and Ellen read in bed. Suddenly, we hear RHYTHMIC BANGING from the guest room next door. Clark looks up from his book and smiles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLARK

Atta boy.

ELLEN

Clark. That's gross.

CLARK

Oh, they're just having fun.

EXT. CLARK AND ELLEN'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

The NOISE from Rusty and Debbie's lovemaking can be heard from outside. An upstairs window opens on the neighboring house and a GAY MAN leans out.

GAY MAN

(yelling)
Keep it down! This is a family
neighborhood!

From inside his apartment, we hear Elvis singing "Burning Love" on the stereo.

EXT. CLARK AND ELLEN'S HOUSE - NEXT MORNING

Rusty comes outside with a cup of coffee and finds Clark on the front porch.

CLARK

There he is.

RUSTY

Hey, Dad. You think you could
drive us to the airport this
afternoon? There's a flight to
Chicago at four.

CLARK

Chicago? What about Walley World?

RUSTY

I think we've had enough.

CLARK

I see.

(then)
Walk with me, son.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO STREET - SHORT TIME LATER

Clark and Rusty walk together. They are both curiously out of breath.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUSTY

(panting)

This trip was supposed to be a chance for us to be together as a family. To relax and have a good time. But it's kind of been a nightmare.

CLARK

(panting)

Of course it has.

We PULL BACK to reveal they are trudging up the STEEPEST STREET in San Francisco.

CLARK

What do you think family vacations are? They're stressful, expensive and exhausting. And each vacation seems worse than the one before it.

(beat)

But you can't give up, Russ.

RUSTY

Why not? They always say 'it's not the destination, it's the journey.'

CLARK

The journey?! The journey sucks. It's all about the destination. In fact, the journey is supposed to be miserable so you appreciate the destination.

They stop to catch their breath.

CLARK

Look, you had a dream to show your kids Walley World, and you can't let anything get in the way of that dream. I know I didn't.

We see this hits home with Rusty.

RUSTY

How would we even get down to Walley World? We don't have a car.

CLARK

You leave that to me.

EXT. CLARK AND ELLEN'S GARAGE - MINUTES LATER

The Griswolds stand in the driveway as Clark pushes the garage door clicker. The door slowly opens to reveal the 25-YEAR-OLD WAGON QUEEN FAMILY TRUCKSTER in all its rusted glory, "HONKY LIPS" still graffitied on the side.

Clark tosses Rusty the keys.

EXT. CLARK AND ELLEN'S HOUSE - SHORT TIME LATER

MUSIC CUE: "Holiday Road."

Clark and Ellen wave from the driveway as Rusty and the family drive off in the Truckster. THICK SMOKE pours out of its tailpipe, leaving Clark and Ellen in a black cloud. They keep waving as they cough violently.

EXT. HIGHWAY - LATER

The Truckster chugs south on the I-5. Lost in the smoke from its exhaust, another car blindly VEERS off the road.

EXT. WALLEY WORLD PARKING LOT ENTRANCE - DUSK

The Truckster drives under the entrance arch, into the vast parking lot. The amusement park is visible in the distance.

INT. TRUCKSTER - CONTINUOUS ACTION

The Griswolds gaze out the front window, awestruck.

RUSTY

We made it. We actually made it!

Debbie leans over and kisses Rusty.

DEBBIE

I'm proud of you, honey.

JAMES

(quietly, to himself)
'Thus did the travellers shed
their weary cloaks and alight at
last upon journey's end.'

KEVIN

What queer wrote that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES

I did.

KEVIN

(backing down)
It's lovely.

RUSTY

Okay, guys. You ready to have the
time of your lives? Come on!

EXT. WALLEY WORLD ENTRANCE - MOMENTS LATER

The Griswolds stand looking up at the park entrance,
their eyes wide.

DEBBIE

Wow.

REVERSE ANGLE

to see the park has gone DRAMATICALLY DOWNHILL since we
last saw it. The sign on the entrance arch now reads:
"WALL WOR D." Beyond it, garbage cans overflow, several
rides are out of order and the crowd is pretty thin.

KEVIN

This is Walley World?

JAMES

It looks kinda rundown.

RUSTY

It could use a little freshening
up. But I'm sure the rides are as
awesome as ever!

They head into the park. Kevin looks up dubiously at a
faded, graffiti-covered statue of MARTY THE MOOSE. An
empty beer can rests on his nose.

EXT. WALLEY WORLD - QUICK SERIES OF SHOTS - MOMENTS LATER

The Griswolds react with disappointment as they see one
ride after another is "CLOSED FOR MAINTENANCE."

The family sits at a food concession area picking at food
that is clearly repulsive. James glances over nervously
at a neighboring table where a PARK MASCOT has passed out
clutching a vodka bottle. The head of his costume sits
on the table beside him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

James and Kevin play the ring toss game in the park's fairway, as Debbie and Rusty cheer them on. Kevin manages to snag one of the empty Coke bottles with a ring. Rusty and Debbie congratulate him. The TEENAGER running the stand removes the empty Coke bottle and hands it to Kevin as his prize. Kevin looks pissed.

EXT. WALLEY WORLD - EVENING

With night nearly fallen, the Griswolds, tired and dispirited, trudge past heaps of trash and defunct rides.

DEBBIE
(quietly)
Russ?

RUSTY
Yeah?

DEBBIE
Walley World is, well, kind of terrible.

RUSTY
It is, isn't it? They've really let the place go. I guess, maybe it's time to --

Just then, he is interrupted by the ROAR of a passing roller coaster car and the SCREAMS of its RIDERS. The Griswolds look up and behold... THE WHIPPER SNAPPER. It's running and it looks almost as impressive as it did 30 years ago.

KEVIN
Whoa.

JAMES
Dad, is that -- ?

RUSTY
(awestruck)
The Whipper Snapper. It's as awesome as I remember it.

And he's off.

RUSTY
Come on, guys! The line doesn't even look that long.

Swept up in his enthusiasm, Debbie and the boys hurry after Rusty.

EXT. WHIPPER SNAPPER ENTRANCE - MINUTES LATER

The Griswolds are next in line to board the coaster.
Rusty can barely contain himself.

RUSTY
You guys psyched? This is the
moment we've all been waiting for!

Suddenly, a group of 15-and-16-YEAR-OLD PUNKS (3 boys and
a girl) cut in front of the Griswolds. Before Rusty can
object, the RIDE OPERATOR puts a chain between the kids
and the Griswolds at the coaster's entrance.

RIDE OPERATOR
Sorry, folks. Last group tonight.
Park's closing.

The operator moves off.

RUSTY
But we were next.

The kids look back at Rusty and snicker. He unhooks the
chain and approaches them.

RUSTY
Excuse me, fellas? You cut in
front of us.

PUNK #1
Blow me.

RUSTY
Okay, that's rude. Look, we drove
2,500 miles to get here and
nothing is going to stand in our
way.

One of the kids gets in Rusty's face.

PUNK #1
Really? Because it looks like I'm
standing in your way. Pussy.

Rusty looks back at his family who look at him sadly.
His shoulders slump.

RUSTY
(to Debbie and the
boys)
Sorry, guys.

He turns back to the punk and, without warning, PUNCHES
the kid square in the jaw.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEVIN

Nice!

DEBBIE

Rusty!

Seeing their friend attacked, the other punks jump on Rusty and start pummeling him. Rusty flails around, trying to defend himself.

KEVIN

Oh, it's on.

Kevin pulls his shirt off and leaps into the fray.

DEBBIE

Kevin!

James moves to follow Kevin into the brawl.

DEBBIE

James, not you!

JAMES

What? I'm not gonna stand here like a little bitch.

He goes.

DEBBIE

Oh, crap.

She also joins in the fight.

Rusty swings wildly at one of the surprised boys, while Kevin puts another in an MMA-style choke hold. Debbie BASHES the third boy with her purse.

Nearby, James and the punk girl are engaged in a nasty, hair-pulling cat fight. They both let out shrill, girlish cries as they battle. Just as the girl starts to get the better of James, she is CLOBBERED over the head with a folding chair wielded by Kevin. She goes down hard.

JAMES

Thanks.

Kevin nods, then lifts the chair to smash the girl again, but James stops him.

JAMES

I think she's done.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

At last, overwhelmed by the attack, the Punks retreat from the ride's entrance. One of them looks back.

PUNK #1

(sputtering)

You people are crazy! What kind of family are you?!

RUSTY

(proudly)

We're the Griswolds! Come on, gang.

They turn and head for the waiting roller coaster car. The Ride Operator nervously steps up.

RIDE OPERATOR

(re: Kevin)

Um, actually, he's not tall enough to ride the --

Rusty gives him a crazy-eyed glare, and he instantly backs down.

RIDE OPERATOR

Enjoy the ride.

Giddy from the fight, they board the car and strap in. Rusty is beside Debbie with the boys behind them.

KEVIN

That was epic!

JAMES

Did you see how I scratched that girl?

DEBBIE

Boys, fighting is never the answer.

(beat)

But that was a pretty cool fight.

RUSTY

See? I knew Walley World would be worth all the effort. This place is magic. It always has been.

The ride begins to move.

RUSTY

Uh-oh. Here we go. Hang on, guys.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The coaster begins its slow ascent up the first hill. There's a silent beat as they all realize they've made it. Debbie puts her hand affectionately on Rusty's.

ANGLE ON JAMES

who smiles as an idea hits him. He pulls Bob Dillon's harmonica from his pocket and begins to play a familiar opening riff: Tracy Chapman's "Fast Car." Doo doo doo dooooo doo, doo doo...

Debbie picks up on the cue and starts to sing:

DEBBIE

(singing)

*'You've got a fast car/I want a
ticket to anywhere --'*

Kevin joins in.

KEVIN/DEBBIE

*'Maybe we make a deal/Maybe
together we can get somewhere --'*

Rusty can't believe it. They're finally singing his song. He smiles broadly and joins in.

RUSTY/KEVIN/DEBBIE

*'Anyplace is better/Starting from
zero we've got nothing to lose/
Maybe we'll make something/But me
myself I've got nothing to prove -- '*

As they reach the climactic chorus, the car nears the top of the hill.

RUSTY/KEVIN/DEBBIE

(heartfelt falsetto)

*'And I-I-I-I had a feeling that I
belonged/I-I-I-I had a feeling I
could be someone, be someone, be
someone...'*

They all SCREAM and throw up their hands as the coaster PLUNGES down a steep hill and into the 360 degree loop.

RUSTY

Here comes the loop!

The coaster speeds into the loop, but just as the Griswolds' car turns upside-down, the ride slows to a halt. There's a beat as they hang there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEBBIE

Russ?

RUSTY

Uh-huh?

DEBBIE

Is it supposed to stay upside-down
like this?

RUSTY

I don't think so.

Another beat.

JAMES

Dad, are we stuck?

RUSTY

Looks that way.

Beat.

KEVIN

Can I put my hands down now?

EXT. WHIPPER SNAPPER - NIGHT

Fire trucks and other rescue vehicles surround the roller
coaster, which is still not moving.

SUPERIMPOSE: FIVE HOURS LATER

A RESCUE WORKER in a cherry-picker is helping the last
riders off the immobile coaster.

On the ground, we FIND the Griswolds, wrapped in
blankets, heading unsteadily toward the park exit. Their
faces are red and their eyes bloodshot.

RUSTY

Well, that was Walley World.
America's favorite family fun
park.

(beat)

And we'll never come here again.

Debbie and the kids cheer as they stumble off toward the
parking lot.

INT. LOS ANGELES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - LATER

The Griswolds arrive at a gate marked "Chicago." Rusty hands the boys their tickets.

RUSTY

Okay, boys, the Petersons are going to pick you up at O'Hare and you'll stay with them for the week. Have a great flight.

He hugs them.

DEBBIE

Wait. What's going on?

JAMES

Yeah. Aren't you coming with us?

RUSTY

There's someplace I need to take your mom first.

DEBBIE

There is?

INT. AIRPLANE - SHORT TIME LATER

We TRACK DOWN the aisle of a wide-bodied jet in flight, STARTING IN the FIRST-CLASS SECTION and MOVING TOWARD the rear.

DEBBIE (O.S.)

How did you do this?!

We MOVE PAST first class and INTO the COACH SECTION.

RUSTY (O.S.)

I used my connections as a pilot to get us free seats.

DEBBIE (O.S.)

Free tickets to Paris! You're amazing.

RUSTY (O.S.)

I told you, you're my queen and you deserve to be treated like one.

We ARRIVE AT the VERY REAR OF THE PLANE, just behind the lavatories, where we FIND Rusty and Debbie perched UNCOMFORTABLY UPRIGHT on JUMPSEATS, like those used by flight attendants.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A TOILET FLUSHES and the door swings open, slamming into Debbie's arm. An OVERWEIGHT WOMAN squeezes past them.

RUSTY

I know this isn't exactly first
class... or coach...

DEBBIE

It's perfect.

They kiss as a VERY FAT MAN squeezes past, his crotch smooching up against Debbie's shoulder.

EXT. SKY - CONTINUOUS ACTION

The AIR FRANCE plane soars through the clouds as the sun rises in the b.g.

DEBBIE (V.O.)

How long is the flight again?

RUSTY (V.O.)

Eleven hours.

SFX: TOILET FLUSH.

DEBBIE (V.O.)

... perfect.

FADE OUT.

THE END

OVER CREDITS:

A SERIES OF "ON-RIDE" STILL SHOTS

of the Griswolds, hanging upside-down, taken in the Whipper Snapper's loop. Each consecutive photo shows them a little more miserable as the hours go by. A colorful border bears the words "I survived the Whipper Snapper!"