

LUST 'n RUST

by
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Original stage play by
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FADE IN:

EXT. REDBUD MOBILE ESTATES - DAY

The instrumental version of "Mobilized" takes us through an intriguing MONTAGE of trailer park life.

-- A wooden picnic table in the common area has a half eaten birthday cake and streamers hanging between satellite dishes.

-- An above ground swimming pool. A woman in cutoffs and a bikini top floats on an inflatable palm tree island. An older man basks in the sun.

-- The OFFICE Trailer has modest wooden steps and a sign over the door.

-- Near another trailer, two longhaired guys with mustaches pull clothespins from their mouths and hang laundry. Two other rocker dudes tend to a vegetable garden.

-- A charming doublewide with potted ferns and a wooden cow knick-knack on the front door. A young woman in a waitress uniform hurries out to her beater Buick Skylark.

-- An African-American woman, 20s, carries a dustpan to the trashcan outside a cotton candy blue and white trailer.

-- A group of kid sling eggs at a vacant trailer with curtains hanging half open.

-- On a well worn wooden porch, a woman in a low cut sundress, late 40s, smokes nervously.

-- A young Latino man and his girlfriend kiss passionately on a covered swing outside their small trailer.

-- An Airstream sports a duct taped window. Empty beer cans are strewn around a beat-up truck.

-- In a field behind the trailer park, a bunch of guys yell "four... three... two... one!" as a car explodes in a cloud of smoke and flames.

Camera pans down to reveal a sign:

WELCOME TO REDBUD MOBILE ESTATES
NO SUITS NO WHINERS NO NARCS

INT. STEVE MORGAN'S SUV - DAY

STEVE MORGAN (30s) a middle management, bright eyed optimist in a blue Oxford shirt and khakis. He's tired, but determined as he looks toward the trailer park.

The SUV, packed full of Steve's belongings, pulls to a stop at the Office Trailer.

Steve climbs out, stretches, looks around.

A METAL BAND suddenly starts PLAYING classic, but messy, Priest, Maiden, Scorpions type metal somewhere. Curious, Steve follows the music to find:

EXT. MARKLEYS' TRAILER - SAME TIME

THE FOUR MARKLEY BROTHERS, longhaired, mustached guys, jamming under an awning. Two electric guitars, bass, drums. "MARKLEY BROS" is stenciled across the bass drum.

Overloaded amps on both sides of the drum kit pulse, guitar feedback screeches.

The Markleys nod at Steve and continue to jam.

Steve watches them for a minute, then wanders away.

EXT. COMMON AREA - DAY

JANETTE (30s), a stressed out single mother, perpetually one crisis away from a nervous breakdown, gets in the face of:

RED WALLACE (50s), the owner/manager and levelheaded philosopher. He uses a cane for his chronic limp (that magically disappears during musical numbers).

Four or five RESIDENTS form a ring around the two like it's a schoolyard fight. The Markleys play louder than ever.

JANETTE

Red, you gotta do something.

RED

About what?

Janette jabs an index finger upward as if to point at the MUSIC filling the air.

RED

The sky?

JANETTE

The noise. I'm tryin' to put the
twins down for a nap.

RED

Janette, what time is it?

JANETTE

I dunno. One-thirty, I guess.

RED

In the afternoon. Would you prefer
one-thirty in the a.m.?

JANETTE

Of course not.

RED

Exactly. All things considered,
there's no better time for the
boys to rehearse than right now.

JANETTE

Thank you. That's most useless
advice I've had all day.

THE BAND GRINDS TO A SCREECHING HALT

LATISHA WASHINGTON (early 20s), a street-wise African-American woman with no time for b.s., walks up with scissors and a comb in hand.

BUZZ (mid-20s), tall and skinny, hurries behind her in a salon cape and sporting a head of HALF-CUT HAIR. He towers over Latisha in height, but she has him beat in attitude.

LATISHA

Why did the music stop? It helps
me do my job.

BUZZ

It helps me too, I was nervous
getting my hair cut.

RED

Sorry, Latisha, and Buzz.

JANETTE

The music's too damn loud.

BUZZ

Most people gotta pay a five
dollar cover to hear the Markleys.

LATISHA

Uh-huh. I heard that. I'd even pay
ten.

JANETTE

Don't get me wrong, the music's
great. Just not at nap time --

RED

Look, Janette. You're new here so
we're all gonna cut you some
slack. You gotta understand --

The Markley Brothers start up again, now playing the
country ballad "REDBUD MOBILE ESTATES".

As Red and the others move around in time with the music,
Janette scowls.

FULL GROUP

*Just look around at this place
Nothin' fancy, that much is true
But at the end of the day
You'll find that you like it, too
Most moved in just for awhile
But then the years, they flew
Hello my friend, take a seat
Kick back, relax, and have a brew*

As everybody sings, Steve watches, unnoticed by the
residents.

FULL GROUP

*Here at the Redbud, you won't be
impressed
Mostly we sit back and chill
Here at the Redbud, you won't get
depressed
Play tunes and fire up the grill*

RED

*Well, I been here since high
school
I ain't done much with my life
Don't got no fancy profession
No title, no trophy wife
For many, life is a bar fight
But most of it don't mean a thing
(MORE)*

RED (CONT.)
*Got my truck, my trailer, and my
 dog
 At Redbud, I am a king*

FULL GROUP
*Here at the Redbud, you won't be
 impressed
 Mostly we sit back and chill
 Here at the Redbud, you won't get
 depressed
 Play tunes and fire up the grill*

LATISHA
To be rich here at Redbud Estates

RED
You won't need a whole lot of cash

BUZZ
Give us some beer and TV

RED & LATISHA
And later, someplace to crash

RED
Some folks look down on our homes

BUZZ & LATISHA
But here's a big news flash

LATISHA
We live in trailers, that's true

FULL GROUP
We're people, and nobody's trash

And with this, Janette finally chimes in with the others:

FULL GROUP
*Here at the Redbud, you won't be
 impressed
 Mostly we sit back and chill
 Here at the Redbud, you won't get
 depressed
 Play tunes and fire up the grill*

*Here at the Redbud, you won't be
 impressed
 Mostly we sit back and chill
 Here at the Redbud, you won't get
 distressed
 You're free to do what you will*

The SONG ENDS. Janette looks around at her neighbors, her anger cooling. She turns to Red and sighs.

JANETTE

All right, damn it. I'll put the twins down earlier from now on.
Happy?

STEVE

I'm looking for Red Wallace.

EXT. TRAILER PARK ROAD - DAY

Red leads Steve down a row of trailers, using his cane for balance.

RED

So you're the new factory manager?
I used to work there.

STEVE

You retired?

RED

If by "retired" you mean getting my leg caught in a conveyer belt and ending up on permanent disability.

STEVE

Jeez. Sorry to hear that.

RED

Don't be. Worked out okay. I bought this trailer park with part of my settlement and socked away the rest. That's worth a mangled leg, don't you think?

STEVE

I'll take your word for it.

EXT. TANYA AND JULIO'S TRAILER - DAY

TANYA (mid-20s), local beauty, squares off against her husband JULIO (late 20s), Latino with a Mexican accent in front of their tiny trailer.

TANYA

You're crazy.

JULIO

I saw it with my own two eyes,
Tanya! You were flirting with that
dude.

TANYA

That dude was an sixty-year-old
priest, Julio.

JULIO

So? Maybe you were leading him
into temptation.

Red and Steve approach.

RED

It's the lovers who love lover's
quarrels.

TANYA

Hi Red. Sorry, Julio's fired up
again.

Tanya sidles up to Steve. She coos:

TANYA

Hey, honey. Want me to show you
around?

(turns to Julio)
See, THAT's flirting!

JULIO

Ay dios mio! That's exactly what
I'm talking about.

RED

You guys cool it; if we wanted
drama, we'd watch *The Kardashians*.

JULIO

Lo siento, Red.

Red shuts the trailer door on the bickering couple. He turns back to Steve.

RED

And you wonder why I never wanted
to get married.

EXT. VACANT TRAILER - DAY

Steve and Red amble toward a vacant trailer with yellow police tape across the door. Splatters of broken eggs have hardened in the sun.

RED

Heard you're overhauling the factory. You're not gonna start processing that genetically modified crap, are you?

STEVE

We're redirecting plant output to reflect a wider array of industrial corn-based ethanol products.

Red stops in front of the crime scene trailer.

RED

So Frankenfood, in other words.

STEVE

Well, yeah, but you can't eat it.

RED

You can say that again. Anyway, here you are -- home, sweet home.

Red gestures toward the trailer. Steve blinks, stunned.

STEVE

This isn't the trailer on your website.

RED

Well, no, not exactly. Couldn't photograph it until the police finished the investigation. It cleaned up pretty good though, considering.

Steve's eyes widen.

STEVE

Have you got any other choices?

RED

'Fraid it's our only vacancy. We got a couple empty pads if you'd rather sleep in your car while you find somewhere else.

STEVE
There's nowhere else for forty
miles...

INT. STEVE'S TRAILER - SAME TIME

Steve steps inside and sniffs the air, grimacing. The interior is cramped, dingy, and disheveled.

STEVE
Is that a skunk I smell?

Red pokes his head in.

RED
The former tenants had quite a pot
growing operation in here.

A Markley Brother stops outside the open door.

MARKLEY BROTHER
They'll be missed.

The Markley Brother walks away.

STEVE
Well, if this is all you got, I
guess I'm stuck with it. Where can
I get something to eat around
here?

RED
Son, you can count your dining
options on two fingers. And one of
those fingers is closed today.

EXT. SMITTY'S DINER - NIGHT

Steve's SUV turns into the nearly empty diner parking lot.

INT. SMITTY'S DINER - NIGHT

CONNIE NICHOLS (late 20s), former-prom-queen-now-waitress, she's sassy and tough, even with a bussing tray.

DUANE KROESSER (late 20s), a good ol' boy in cowboy boots, western hat, and a well worn Carhartt jacket. He follows Connie as she buses tables.

CONNIE

I told you to stop bothering me at
work, Duane.

DUANE

I ain't here to bother you, I just
need a favor.

CONNIE

The answer is no.

DUANE

You didn't even give me a chance
to ask.

CONNIE

That's because I know you're gonna
hit me up for one of three things:
money, money, or money. Oh, or
sex, so make it four. None of
which I'm inclined to give you.

Connie shoves the plates into Duane's hands.

CONNIE

If you're gonna get in my way you
might as well make yourself
useful.

Connie moves on, Duane follows.

DUANE

You're not wearing your ring.

CONNIE

And don't you dare ask for it
back.

DUANE

My rent's due. I'm a little short.

CONNIE

Of course you are.

She puts down the plates, snatches her tip -- TWO DOLLARS
-- off the table and slaps the cash into Duane's hand.

CONNIE

Here, go play the Lotto.
Maybe you'll get lucky.

DUANE

Jeez, Connie, that's cold.

CONNIE

Please get out of here before you
get me fired.

Connie approaches the KITCHEN WINDOW as SMITTY (60s)
leans out and slides a plate onto the shelf.

The front door JINGLES. Connie notices Steve walking in.

Steve sees Connie and freezes. Their eyes lock.

CONNIE

Hi. Can I help you?

STEVE

One for dinner.

CONNIE

You must be Steve Morgan.

STEVE

Yeah... how'd you know?

Connie points at the AgriB-I-G logo on Steve's shirt.

CONNIE

We've been expecting you, Mr.
Morgan.

STEVE

You must be...

(checks her name tag)

... Connie.

CONNIE

Connie Nichols. At your service.

STEVE

So how did you know my name,
Connie Nichols?

CONNIE

Everybody knows. You're a popular
topic of conversation.

STEVE

Really? That's, uh... creepy.

CONNIE

Small town life, Mr. Morgan. Not a
whole lot to do out here but get
drunk, get laid and talk shit.

STEVE
And which one is your favorite?

Connie smiles at Steve as she saunters over to the kitchen window.

CONNIE
You'll just have to find out for yourself, won't you, Mr. Morgan?

Steve grins back at her.

STEVE
Call me Steve.

"LOOK AWAY" BEGINS as the LIGHT in the diner DIMS, becoming moody and evocative.

CONNIE
*I'm working on an evening shift
Pouring coffee, giving souls a
lift
Puttin' in an order for a Chicken
Steak
I'm tired as hell and my ankles
ache*

As Connie sings, Steve walks over to the counter and sits down as if hypnotized. She hands him a menu.

CONNIE
*Then he walks in sits down for a
meal
But today he's in for another deal*

STEVE
*I rub my eyes and an angel's there
Hands me a menu through
fluorescent glare
She waits and smiles as my eyes
linger
She's not hiding her bare ring
finger
Hey watch it buddy, better play it
smart
With just one look she's gonna
steal your heart*

BOTH
*I'd better look away, better look
away
Look away, better look away*

Steve begins to scan the menu. Food is clearly the last thing on his mind.

CONNIE

*While he decides I think I'll
check him out
He's kind of cute without a doubt
Not that I'm lookin' for another
guy
There's something here that I
can't deny
Be careful darlin', better play it
smart
With just one look he's gonna to
steal my heart*

BOTH

*Only a look away, just a look away
Only a look away, just a look away*

Steve snaps the menu shut.

STEVE

*My mind's made up, I'll take the
patty melt
Let the games begin 'cause I've
just dealt
There's something here I can't
verbalize
I'm falling into those deep green
eyes*

BOTH

*The moment's come that we both
knew
I feel a spark, don't you feel it,
too*

CONNIE

*He asked for that burger and he
wanted it well*

STEVE

*The diner spun like a carousel
Couldn't help it, didn't play it
smart*

CONNIE

*He shoulda stopped at that mini-
mart*

Connie and Steve lean in to one another, their faces only inches from one another.

BOTH
*The moment's come that we both
knew
I felt a spark, don't you feel it,
too
Only a look away, a look away
Only a look away, only a look away
It's just a look away*

The SONG ENDS. Realism returns to the diner.

Connie gives him a patty melt piled high with fries.

EXT. FACTORY - DAY

An old brick building with frosted windows and large stacks billowing white smoke clouds into the sky.

The third shift employees leave as first shift enters.

INT. FACTORY - FLOOR - DAY

Steve, wearing a navy blue suit, stands with perfect posture and a look of uncertainty. Large boxes are positioned next to his shiny brown shoes.

A FEW DOZEN FACTORY EMPLOYEES -- Julio, Buzz, and Duane among them -- gather on the main floor of the factory, squeezed in among the ARCHAIC MACHINERY.

STEVE
Morning. Thank you for coming.

DUANE
Of course we came. We work here.

STEVE
Excellent point. As you all know,
I'm Steve Morgan of your new
parent company, Agri-B-I-G...

The crowd CHUCKLES.

STEVE
Something funny?

BUZZ
Just the way you spelled out the
"big" in Agribig.

STEVE

That's the correct way to say it.
Agri-B-I-G. It's short for
Agricultural Bio-Innovations
Group. Nobody calls it Agribig.

More LAUGHTER from the crowd.

DUANE

Everyone calls it Agribig.

STEVE

Okay, whatever... No, not
whatever. Agri-B-I-G is your
company now and you should call
it... well, call it whatever you
want, but say it with pride. This
is your company now.

DUANE

Ha! We don't own this company. It
owns us.

STEVE

Please -- if anything it's renting
you eight hours a day. Regardless,
these are exciting times for all
of us. A team of engineers is on
the way to implement an equipment
upgrade that will increase
productivity and efficiency that
will push this processing factory
into the digital revolution, and
you, my friends, are coming with
it. And, as a bonus --

Steve reaches into a box and holds up a bright green
SWEATSHIRT with AGRIBIG in yellow lettering.

STEVE

-- Free sweatshirts for everybody!

Blank stares.

The workers drift back to their stations, ignoring the
sweatshirts, and MUTTERING amongst themselves. Buzz comes
forward and grabs a stack of four. Duane stands next to
him, shaking his head.

DUANE

Dude, those things are butt ugly.

BUZZ

Yeah, but if you cut the sleeves
off and turn 'em inside out,
they're great for waxing your
truck.

DUANE

Oh, man, you're right. Awesome.

Duane grabs a bunch.

STEVE

Can you please leave some for the
others?

Buzz and Duane glance around at the nonexistent "others."

STEVE

Oh, they didn't want any?

BUZZ

You're in Illinois, man, Bears
country, these are Green Bay
Packers colors.

STEVE

(sighs)

Fine. Help yourself.

DUANE

Thanks, Steve. That's very B-I-G
of you.

INT. HENDERSON'S OFFICE - DUSK

BOB HENDERSON (50s), so polished and whitebread he looks
like he was genetically engineered in a GOP laboratory,
works at his massive desk. The office is imposingly
spacious, with an impressive view of the MANHATTAN
SKYLINE in the distance.

Henderson's overachieving assistant, JEFF BURTON (late
20s), straightens a pile of reports. He wears a fitted
gray suit, his face shows arrogance, but he moves like a
submissive puppy to Henderson.

The PHONE RINGS. Burton picks up the phone, wipes the
speaker end with a disinfectant pad, and hands it to
Henderson.

HENDERSON

Henderson.

INT. STEVE'S TRAILER - DAY

Steve tries to stay upbeat and ignore the lingering stench of the floors.

INTERCUT

HENDERSON

Steve-O! How's flyover country treating you so far?

STEVE

They hate me.

HENDERSON

Good! You're their boss. They're supposed to hate you.

STEVE

Shouldn't they at least start in neutral and then work their way up to hate?

HENDERSON

Listen, you want to make friends, buy a dog, for chrissakes. You're not there to be their friend. You find a place to live yet?

STEVE

Yeah, if you can call it that.

HENDERSON

Ah, you should be used to it. Aren't you from Illinois?

STEVE

Ohio.

HENDERSON

Ohio, Illinois -- same thing. Can't keep 'em straight.

STEVE

I spent my life trying to escape "Dismal Valley, Ohio", now I'm living in a trailer in "Dismal Valley, Illinois". It's like I never left.

HENDERSON

You want to make Vice President? Oversee the retrofits.

(MORE)

HENDERSON (CONT.)
Make sure the local yokels don't blow up the new equipment. You spend six, seven months out in the field with the corn and the cows and whatever the hell else is out there. Then you come home, we hose you down and consider you for that promotion.

STEVE
I know the deal.

HENDERSON
Believe me, your work will not go unrewarded. Chin up and keep me posted on your progress, Steve-O, great talking with you.

Henderson hangs up and hands the phone to Burton. Burton wipes the speaker end of the phone.

HENDERSON
You don't have to do that, it's my phone.

INT. STEVE'S TRAILER - DAY

On Steve's end, DIAL TONE.

A knock at the door.

Steve opens the door.

Red and Latisha stand outside holding some boxes.

Latisha wrinkles her nose.

LATISHA
Smells kinda rank in there still.
You gettin a contact high?

STEVE
No. Just some existential despair.
I'm actually starting to get used to it.

RED
Latisha and I are making a run to our favorite charity. Care to join us?

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Steve sits between Latisha and Red as they drive down the main drag of town in Red's pick-up truck.

They pass the only stoplight, a couple storefronts, and THE RIB SHACK.

The truck parks. Steve, Latisha, and Red walk along.

LATISHA

What's your story, Steve?

STEVE

Everyone here seems to know my story, what's your story?

EXT. THE GOLDEN COMB - SAME TIME

They stop in front of a hair salon full of Caucasian women getting their hair done.

LATISHA

You mean, "What's a fine black woman like you doing living in the whitest place on Earth?"

STEVE

Uh, in so many words.

"CAUCASIAN HAIR" BEGINS as we

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TWISTED ROOTS (FLASHBACK) - DAY

The Golden Comb becomes TWISTED ROOTS, a beauty and hair salon.

Latisha strolls down a grimy street on the South Side of Chicago. As she raps, she ducks inside.

LATISHA

(raps)
*I was doin' hair -- for my
livelihood
Up in Chicago -- there in the old
'hood*

INT. TWISTED ROOTS (FLASHBACK) - DAY

The place is jumping -- every station is occupied by STYLISTS and their CUSTOMERS...

... except the station at the far end of the room, where Latisha stands in front of an empty chair, bored.

LATISHA

(raps)
*They had me doin' -- walk-ins from hell
 Cause I couldn't build up -- a clientele
 I'm not into -- the corn row craze
 A processed wave -- puts me in a haze*
 (sings)
*I had this feeling, I needed a change
 There's no concealing, it's mighty strange
 The truth revealing, finally found my flair
 For heads appealing, I do Caucasian hair*

THE FRONT DOOR

swings open. A WHITE WOMAN enters, looks around. Clearly the first time she's been there.

Everybody turns to check out the white girl.

LATISHA

(raps)
*So this white chick shows -- at the doorway
 We said, "what's this -- April Fools Day?"*

Latisha walks over to Tanya, leads her to her station.

LATISHA

*But she dropped in -- to get her hair done
 So bein' a walk-in -- they let me have fun*

CUT TO Latisha working on Tanya's hair. We see her enact what she's rapping in the song:

LATISHA

*Well she wants a big-ass --
country do
Mentions some singer -- I don't
know who*

*But I get the drift -- I start
sprayin'
And I start teasin' -- and I start
prayin'*

*And that head'a hair -- it gets
real biggy
We start throwin' down -- and
getting real jiggy*

*I hold up the mirror -- so she
sees what's done,
And she gets real quiet -- tears
start to run
I see this big grin -- on her face
Then I knew -- that I'd found my
place*

*(sings)
I had this feeling, I needed a
change
There's no concealing, it's a
mighty strange
The truth revealing, finally found
my flair
For heads appealing, I do
Caucasian hair*

The SONG ENDS.

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Latisha, Steve, and Red walk down the sidewalk.

LATISHA

*-- I guess I kinda found my
calling that day. I just have some
kinda God-given talent for white
chicks' hair. So I moved down
here. And it's workin' out okay.
I've got my own business, a lot of
loyal clients, and people here
have been pretty nice to me. I'm
doin' all right.*

RED

'Tisha here's like a lotta the folks at Redbud. Move in for a little while, short term, but they get comfortable and end up stickin' around Freebird. Could happen to you, too.

A Markley Brother walks out of the Mount Etna General Store.

STEVE

What's Mount Etna? I didn't see any mountains on my way into town.

MARKLEY BROTHER

Town's original name, bro. The name changed in 1978, the year after that plane crash broke up Lynyrd Skynyrd. Tragedy, I tell ya.

The Markley Brother walks away.

STEVE

Why didn't they change the sign?

RED

Things just don't change much around here.

INT. THE COZY CHICKS - DAY

Four WOMEN (70s) sit in comfortable, cushy chairs. Three knit sweaters from the yarn another woman unravels from second-hand sweaters and cardigans.

In the middle of the store, a dining table has mugs and a plate of homemade cookies.

WOMAN 1

I heard he isn't married, he might be gay.

WOMAN 2

Well, I looked him up on the internet, but there are too many Steve Morgans. The only Steve Morgan in Illinois I found was arrested for stealing a van and robbing a Waffle House.

WOMAN 3

Well, my son-in-law, says he shows up to work in shined up shoes, but is staying in that trailer they busted over at Redbud. He's probably a narc.

WOMAN 4

Good. Maybe he's come to Freebird to clean the town of all the drugs.

WOMAN 1

He better not take my Roxicodone. Lord knows that's the only thing that touches my arthritis.

Red and Latisha enter with Steve.

The women stop talking upon seeing Steve.

RED

Hi, ladies, we brought you this month's yarn scraps.

LATISHA

There's some nice pastels and multi-colors in this round.

Steve leans in close.

STEVE

Oh, you're making sweaters. Aren't they a little small?

WOMAN 1

The ones for roosters are bigger.

STEVE

Excuse me?

The front door opens, a LADY enters holding a hen wearing a bright red sweater.

STEVE

Of course, chicken sweaters.

RED

Chickens get cold around here in the winter.

EXT. THE COZY CHICKS - DAY

Steve, Latisha, and Red exit the storefront. The picture window has a painting of a fat, happy chicken wearing a cozy sweater.

Duane's pickup truck drives by. He beeps and waves at Latisha and Red.

LATISHA

Duane is an asshole with a capital A.

(to Red)

You heard Connie finally dumped his sorry butt, right?

STEVE

Connie the waitress?

LATISHA

Connie the waitress.

"CONNIE'S GOT A DOUBLE-WIDE" BEGINS as we

CUT TO:

INT. CONNIE'S TRAILER (FLASHBACK) - DAY

Steve, Red and Latisha stand against the wall, unseen, as Connie and Duane shout at each other. We can't hear their argument, their voices obscured by Red and Latisha:

RED & LATISHA

*Connie's got a double wide
Wonder what she's got inside
Savin' overtime for years
Paid from Duane's sweat and tears*

Connie grabs a coffee mug and flings it at Duane, who dodges it. Red, Latisha and Steve duck as the mug hits the wall behind them.

EXT. CONNIE'S TRAILER (FLASHBACK) - DAY

Red, Steve and Latisha sit in beach chairs next to the trailer, watching as Duane storms out the front door.

A second later, Connie starts chucking CLOTHES outside. Duane scrambles to catch them.

RED & LATISHA

*Threw her ex out just last May
He's out thumin' the ol' highway
A lucky guy might have a chance
But she's all through with romance*

*Connie's got a double wide
Connie's got a double wide*

INT. SMITTY'S DINER (FLASHBACK) - NIGHT

Steve, Red and Latisha sit at the counter, watching as Connie rings up a CUSTOMER.

As she does, she notices the DIAMOND RING on her hand.

RED & LATISHA

*Eighteen wheels took it down the
road
That trailer's got a wide load
She'll plant a garden in the
spring
When she throws away that diamond
ring*

She pulls off the ring and sticks it in her pocket.

INT. CONNIE'S TRAILER - BEDROOM (FLASHBACK) - NIGHT

Connie sleeps on one side of the bed. Red, Latisha and Steve sit up on the other side, facing the camera/us.

RED & LATISHA

*Connie's got a double wide
Connie's got a double wide*

*She's got dreams so real
She's got dreams so real
She's got dreams so real*

INT. LATISHA'S TRAILER (FLASHBACK) - DAY

Part of the trailer is outfitted as Latisha's hair salon. Latisha is currently working on Connie, who smiles contentedly under a thick layer of disgusting-looking beauty cream. Steve and Red stand behind Latisha.

RED & LATISHA

*You can dye your hair and change
your style*

(MORE)

RED & LATISHA (CONT.)
*It's a brand new world, better
 last awhile
 No one's talkin' or will confide
 She's the tattooed queen of her
 double wide*

*Connie's got a double wide
 Connie's got a double wide*

*She's got dreams so real
 She's got dreams so real
 She's got dreams so real*

The SONG ENDS as we abruptly

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKESIDE ROAD - DAWN

The sun rises on the horizon as Steve jogs down the quiet road, wearing an AgriBIG sweatshirt. Connie's Buick pulls up beside him.

She rolls down the passenger side window and inches along as he runs.

CONNIE
 Hey, stranger. You're out early.

STEVE
 I see I'm not the only one.

CONNIE
 Not by choice, believe me. Got called in to work the breakfast shift. Want a ride?

STEVE
 Kind of defeats the purpose of running, don't you think?

CONNIE
 That's true. I'll see you later.

Steve gives a little salute and Connie speeds away.

IN CONNIE'S CAR

Connie glares at herself in the mirror.

CONNIE
 "Want a ride?" Lame, Connie.

BACK ON THE ROAD

Steve jogs in disgust.

STEVE

"Kind of defeats the purpose of running." Just get in the damn car, jerk.

INT. SMITTY'S DINER - DAY

Connie pours coffee for CUSTOMERS sitting at the counter. Among them is a Markley Brother.

Steve enters the diner, drenched in sweat and panting. He looks at Connie, jogging in place.

STEVE

Hello, again.

CONNIE

Hi, again. What can I get you?

STEVE

A recommendation. If I were to theoretically ask someone out to a fancy local dining establishment, where would we go?

CONNIE

Theoretically? The Rib Shack.

STEVE

That doesn't sound too fancy.

CONNIE

We have no fancy in these parts.

STEVE

Duly noted. When should I pick you up?

CONNIE

Have we moved from you theoretically asking me out to you actually asking me out?

STEVE

In theory, I would say so.

CONNIE

I'm off at eight. I'll just meet you there at 8:30.

STEVE
Works for me.

Steve exits. Connie watches through the window as he jogs away. When she turns back to work, she can barely contain her grin as her customers exchange disapproving looks.

MARKLEY BROTHER
What about Duane?

CONNIE
Duane? Duane's not invited.

Connie cheerfully pours him a cup of coffee.

EXT. RIB SHACK - NIGHT

Connie's Buick pulls up in front of the rundown eatery, parking next to Steve's SUV.

INSIDE THE BUICK

Connie unbuckles the seat belt, squirms out of her waitress uniform and tosses it onto the back seat.

Sitting there in her bra and panties, she grabs a SHOPPING BAG off the passenger side floor, reaches in and pulls out an inexpensive but cute SUNDRESS and NEW HEELS. As she yanks off the sales tags --

MIKE AND DEB (A MIDDLE-AGED COUPLE)

emerge from the Rib Shack. They do a double take at the sight of half-naked Connie.

Connie casually covers her body with the dress and waves.

CONNIE
Evenin', Mike. Deb. Sorry 'bout the indecent exposure.

MIKE
No biggie. These things happen.

Deb scowls at Mike, who's grinning at Connie a little too broadly. She steps in front of her husband -- ruining his view -- and flashes a fake smile at Connie.

DEB
Are you working at the Rib Shack tonight, Connie?

CONNIE

No, I'm having dinner with a friend.

DEB

Oh, okay, we'll let you get yourself together.

CONNIE

Much obliged. Have a good one!

Deb grabs Mike and drags him away. When they're out of Connie's earshot, Deb hisses:

DEB

She should be ashamed of herself.

MIKE

Hey, if you got it, flaunt it.

DEB

I was talkin' about her going out on a date. She's ain't even divorced yet. What are you talkin' about?

BACK IN THE BUICK

Connie pulls on the sundress, checks her hair and touches up her lipstick in the rearview.

She opens the car door and slips on her new heels.

INT. RIB SHACK - NIGHT

This place hasn't had a makeover since the Eisenhower administration: faded walls, chipped Formica, rickety wooden chairs, busted jukebox in the corner.

Steve and Connie sit at a table, the only diners. Steve sports a suit and tie.

They dig into the MOUNTAINS OF DRIPPING RIBS piled up in little baskets, dropping the gnawed-clean bones into a metal bucket.

STEVE

... So what else do you want to know about me?

CONNIE

Let's see... Childhood pets?

STEVE
A turtle named Speedo.

CONNIE
Clever. Name of first girlfriend?

STEVE
Sheila Newman. Broke my heart in
kindergarten when she left me for
my best friend.

CONNIE
That little hussy.

STEVE
Tell me about it. Took me until
nap time to get over her.

CONNIE
Glad to hear you moved on. Got any
tattoos?

STEVE
None that I'm aware of. You?

CONNIE
Mmmmm... I'll plead the fifth.

STEVE
Now I'm intrigued. Let's see it.

CONNIE
It's in a personal place.

STEVE
Now I'm really intrigued.

CONNIE
I'll bet you are. Pretty sure I
got it on a trip to Fort
Lauderdale with Tanya.

STEVE
You're pretty sure?

CONNIE
I was so hammered, I don't
remember much of anything.

STEVE
Look at you -- the party girl.

CONNIE

Well, not any more. We all do things we regret, ya know? Bad tats. Jeggings. Husbands.

STEVE

It's not a tattoo of his name, is it?

CONNIE

Please, I wasn't that drunk.

Steve discards another bone and licks his fingers.

STEVE

There's nothing like trying to impress a date while slathered in rib sauce. But you know, even with the bad lighting and the depressing decor, this was a good suggestion.

CONNIE

We don't have a lot of choices around here anymore.

A brief hint of sadness crosses Connie's face as she realizes the deeper meaning of what she just said. She quickly recovers.

CONNIE

So -- you travel much in your job?

STEVE

Sometimes.

CONNIE

Must be fun.

STEVE

At first. But it wears you down.

CONNIE

I guess. I'd still like to go to even half the places you've been.

STEVE

You'll get your chance someday.

CONNIE

Just as long as I've got somebody to keep me company.

"OVER AND DONE" BEGINS.

The world around Steve and Connie FADES AWAY, replaced by A SERIES OF ROMANTIC BACKGROUNDS: THE EIFFEL TOWER... VENICE, ITALY... ZUMA BEACH... NIAGARA FALLS... TIMES SQUARE, etc.

The effect is intentionally artificial, a living version of one of those booths in which you're photographed against a green screen and inserted into a scene.

CONNIE AND STEVE

*Headin' down the highway
Lookin' for a place to be
Tomorrow is a new day
Made for you and me
Searchin' for a new home
A place where there's no fear
We must be together
Now it seems so clear*

*Rollin' by the junctions
Lookin' for a brand new start
Searchin' for connections, 'cause
You have touched my heart*

*Where will we go
Where will we run
What will we know
When it's all over and done?
(hum verse)
Where will we go
Where will we run
What will we know
When it's all over and done?*

*All our wheels are rollin'
Miles and miles to go
Home is where we find it
So how will we know?*

*Searchin' for a new home
A place where there's no fear
We must be together
Now it seems so clear*

*Fields and hills and meadows
There beneath the stars
We will live forever, for
We have joined our hearts*

*Where will we go
Where will we run
What will we know
When it's all over and done?*

(MORE)

CONNIE AND STEVE (CONT.)

*Where will we go
Where will we run
What will we know
When it's all over and done?
Over and done
Over and done*

As THE SONGS ENDS we CUT TO:

INT. THE RIB SHACK - SAME TIME

STEVE

chomping down on a rib. We're back to reality.

STEVE

I could really get used to these
ribs.

CONNIE

Jimmie's ribs are served right out
of the smoker.

(calls out)

You got a microwave back there,
Jimmie?

JIMMIE (40s, African American) pops into view at the
KITCHEN WINDOW.

JIMMIE

Hell no! Who says that?

STEVE

This sauce is so good, it's the
closest thing to a religious
experience I've ever had.

CONNIE

(to Jimmie)
I think he likes your sauce.

JIMMIE

Never met a man who didn't.

CONNIE

And when you open that roadhouse
out on I-70 one day, the whole
world's gonna know about it.

JIMMIE

Yup, right after I win the lotto,
cure cancer and get my own show on
Food Network.

(to Steve)

Girl's got some big dreams.

CONNIE

Somebody has to around here.

EXT. CONNIE'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Steve and Connie walk to the front door, arms linked.

CONNIE

I had a lot of fun tonight.

STEVE

I did, too.

Beat. They look at each other. The Moment of Truth.

STEVE

So are you going to invite me in
to view your tattoo?

Connie starts CRACKING UP.

CONNIE

That was the worst come-on line
ever.

STEVE

But points for trying, right?

CONNIE

Yes, points for trying, but sorry,
the tattoo is still off-limits...

She leans forward and kisses Steve.

CONNIE

... for now.

Steve watches Connie head inside. He turns and walks
away, grinning.

EXT. EDGE OF REDBUD MOBILE ESTATES - NIGHT

Tanya and Buzz tromp through the darkness to this remote
corner of the trailer park, away from the homes.

A FENCE runs along the perimeter of the property, beyond which we see DARKNESS.

BUZZ

What are we doing out here?

TANYA

Stargazing.

BUZZ

Since when do you care about the stars? I mean, aside from your horoscope or whatever.

Tanya whirls around and grabs Buzz, pulling him close. She kisses him.

For a second, Buzz is too stunned to respond. But then, once he realizes what's going on, he's all too happy to reciprocate.

They stumble against the fence, kissing passionately, Tanya squeezing Buzz's rear as he tries to work his hand up under her T-shirt.

They finally break for a breath.

BUZZ

Wow. Where'd that come from?

TANYA

I know you've wanted me since sophomore year.

BUZZ

Well, yeah. But it's not like I ever expected to actually get you.

TANYA

Congratulations -- you're finally getting your shot.

"WHAT WE'RE DOIN'" BEGINS as the environment around Tanya and Buzz takes on a DREAMLIKE GLOW and the stars above TWINKLE BRIGHTER.

TANYA AND BUZZ

*Watch the news any night
Terrorists with dynamite
Children ducking drive-by shooters
Porno on the school's computers*

*There's evil everywhere ya look
Psycho killer with a scrapbook
(MORE)*

TANYA AND BUZZ (CONT.)

*Is this Earth's termination
As foretold in Revelation?*

*Watch the news on any night
Things ain't always black and
white
This is what they always say
Bend the rules, you'll be okay*

*All we're asking in this song
Is what we're doin' all that
wrong?
Do what you do to get along
Is what we're doin' all that
wrong?*

*A little love
Can ease the pain
A hug, a kiss
Can keep you sane*

*Corporations closin' factories
Toxic waste in breast implants
Politicians' lies revealed
Secret deals they have concealed*

*Watch the news on any night
You're gonna lose your appetite
Airline pilots smokin' grass
Have you seen the price of gas?*

*All we're asking in this song
Is what we're doin' all that
wrong?
Do what you do to get along
Is what we're doin' all that
wrong?
Is what we're doin' all that
wrong?
Is what we're doin' all that
wrong?*

Buzz and Tanya kiss as the SONG ENDS. Back to reality.

After a moment, Buzz breaks off the kiss.

BUZZ

What about Julio? He is my best friend and your husband. What would he say about this?

TANYA

He wouldn't say nothin'. He'd just kick your butt into next week.

(MORE)

TANYA (CONT.)
But screw it -- he always thinks
I'm cheating on him, so I might as
well myself an affair for real.
Right?

BUZZ
I guess...

TANYA
So let's stop talking about it and
start doing it.

BUZZ
Out here?

TANYA
Out here. In your trailer. Hell,
we can do it in your truck. Just
relax, Buzz. It's sex, not a trip
to the dentist.

BUZZ
Ahhhh... Let's go to my trailer.

FARTHER DOWN THE ROAD

Steve strolls along. He notices Buzz and Tanya
approaching, hand in hand. They spot him and let go of
each other.

TANYA
Talk about a buzzkill.

STEVE
Evening.

BUZZ
Evenin', Mr. Morgan.

STEVE
Please, it's Steve.

TANYA
We were just stargazing.

STEVE
Well, don't let me interrupt.

TANYA
It's okay, I should be getting
back home, anyway.

Buzz and Steve watch Tanya stroll away.

STEVE

Sorry, Buzz, I didn't mean to
break up the party.

BUZZ

It's all right, I'll see you at
work, Mr. Morgan.

Buzz walks off in another direction.

STEVE

Steve.

INT. FACTORY - FLOOR - DAY

Steve and the other workers stare at something off-screen
as an ENGINEER in a hard hat walks over.

STEVE

Are we good?

ENGINEER

We're good.
(calls out)
Hit it!

WIDER

We see that some of the old machinery has been replaced
by GLEAMING NEW TECHNOLOGY, STORAGE CONTAINERS AND
DISTILLATION TANKS.

ANOTHER ENGINEER flips a switch The MACHINERY RUMBLES TO
LIFE as VARIOUS PARTS of the assembly line MOVE.

Steve nods in approval.

STEVE

Impressive.

ENGINEER

No, sir, the Grand Canyon is
impressive... This is prodigious.

INT. FACTORY - LUNCHROOM - DAY

The factory workers chow down at the tables scattered
throughout the large commissary area.

Buzz seems uncomfortable sitting next to Julio.

JULIO
You heard about Connie, right?

BUZZ
Going out with the boss? Yeah.

JULIO
If Tanya pulled that crap on me,
I'd lose my frickin' mind, man. I
don't know how Duane stands it.

BUZZ
(quietly)
Maybe you ought to go easy on
Tanya, Julio...

JULIO
What did you just say?

BUZZ
I said, does Duane know? About
Connie?

JULIO
Haven't seen him randomly punching
stuff, so I don't think so.

BUZZ
I'd hate to be the one to tell
him.

Duane walks over and joins them.

DUANE
Tell who what?

Julio and Buzz exchange glances. Julio gives him a nod as if to say, "You do it."

BUZZ
Seriously? Did I not just say I'd
hate to be the one to do this?

JULIO
Just grow a pair and tell him.

BUZZ
If he hits me, you're paying the
hospital bill.
(to Duane)
Connie went out last night.

DUANE
Yeah? So?

BUZZ
With another dude.

Duane looks at them both. His eyes narrow. His hands tighten into fists.

DUANE
What other dude?

Julio and Buzz stare past Duane's shoulder. Duane turns around to see

STEVE

standing there, tray of food in hand and looking for a place to sit.

Duane whips back and pounds the table with his fist, sending his own tray of food BOUNCING to the floor.

All heads turn in his direction as he heads for the exit. Steve scrambles to get out of his way.

EXT. REDBUD MOBILE ESTATES - LAUNDRY AREA - DAY

Duane's truck ROARS UP, SLAMMING to a halt. Duane hops out, 200-plus pounds of white hot rage.

INT. REDBUD MOBILE ESTATES - LAUNDRY AREA - SAME TIME

Connie collects laundry from the dryer. Duane stomps in the door.

CONNIE
What is it now, Duane? Lemme guess
-- the dog ate your paycheck this time.

DUANE
I don't need your money.

CONNIE
There's a first.

DUANE
Heard at work today that you went on a date.

CONNIE
I did. Better get used to it.

Connie picks up her laundry basket and walks away.

EXT. REDBUD MOBILE ESTATES - ROAD - SAME TIME

DUANE
Get your butt back here!

Connie whirls around.

CONNIE
Are you kidding me? "Get your butt back here"? You couldn't talk to me like that even when we were happily married.

She continues on her way. Duane takes a deep breath and trots after her. He catches up as she barrels along.

Duane takes the basket from Connie as they walk.

DUANE
Let me help you with that.

CONNIE
Thank you. I'm still seeing other people.

DUANE
All right, fine. Whatever. But do you gotta see Steve Morgan?

CONNIE
Why not? He's nice.

DUANE
He's a weasel.

CONNIE
Is he, now?

DUANE
A snake in the grass.

CONNIE
Well, which one is he? A weasel or a snake in the grass?

DUANE
You can't trust him... We can't trust him. You think that just 'cause he lives in a trailer like us he's one of us? Think about it. Factory manager.

(MORE)

DUANE (CONT.)
He could get himself a place up in
the Heights if he wanted to. And
why doesn't he? I'll tell you
why... 'cause this is just
temporary for him.

CONNIE
Well, hell, Duane, is it your
dream to live here forever?

DUANE
Point is, I think they sent him
here to do some dirty work -- make
some points for himself at our
expense, then move on.

They stop in front of

EXT. CONNIE'S TRAILER - SAME TIME

Connie turns to Duane.

CONNIE
Well, Mister Conspiracy Theory,
until you got yourself some real
evidence, maybe you ought to give
the guy the benefit of the doubt.

DUANE
I told you -- I don't trust him.

CONNIE
No, Duane. You don't like him.
There's a difference.

Connie takes the basket back and turns to walk away.

DUANE
Wait a second. Please!

It's the "please" that gets her. She turns back.

DUANE
Look, talkin' about givin' a guy
the benefit of the doubt --

CONNIE
Oh, no...

DUANE
Maybe we can re-think this whole
splittin' up idea.

CONNIE

Duane, we are so way past that.

DUANE

Why can't you forgive me?

CONNIE

Some things just aren't
forgivable.

DUANE

Come on, it was only once...

CONNIE

It was my mother, Duane.

DUANE

I was drunk...

CONNIE

My own mom.

DUANE

She was wearing your sundress...

CONNIE

Not even my stepmom, my real mom.

DUANE

She started it...

CONNIE

So? That doesn't mean you had to
finish it.

DUANE

I'm an asshole, okay? There's no
excuse... Please... Forgive me.

Beat. Connie has trouble avoiding Duane's pleading gaze.

CONNIE

We're done, you know that. Just
let it go. Let me go.

Clearly unsure what else to say, Connie lets herself into
her trailer.

Duane stares at the trailer with palpable sadness

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CONNIE'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Exact same shot as the previous one, only now Duane is gone. Across the street and a couple units down:

EXT. DUANE'S TRAILER - NIGHT

DUANE

slouching in a ratty old BEACH CHAIR on top of his own little TRAILER.

He leans back, staring up at the stars, bottle of Jack in hand. "LET HER GO" BEGINS.

DUANE

*A night like this, many years ago
We found a world that we didn't
know
A precious time when I could reach
out for her hand
Why I was such a fool, I'll never
understand*

Duane stands up, walks to the edge of the trailer, looks down at Connie's place. The blinds are drawn.

DUANE

*I didn't know, I was so blind, but
now I see
She is the only one in this world
for me
Let her go...
Let her go...*

Duane paces around.

DUANE

*A night like this, will never be
the same
I made mistakes, yeah I'll take
the blame
They say to prove your love you
gotta set 'em free
Whatever made me think that she'd
come back to me*

*I didn't know, I was so blind, but
now I see
She is the only one in this world
for me
Let her go...*

(MORE)

DUANE (CONT.)
Let her go...

*A night like this, so many more
 ahead
 I drag myself to my empty bed
 Those winter winds, they can chill
 you to the bone
 Am I to live my life without her --
 all alone*

Duane settles back into his chair.

DUANE
*I didn't know, I was so blind, but
 now I see
 She is the only one in this world
 for me
 Let her go...
 Let her go...
 Let her go...
 Let her go...*

The SONG ENDS. Duane takes a pull off the bottle. SIGHS.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Steve's SUV speeds down the dark local road.

INT. STEVE'S SUV (MOVING) - NIGHT

Steve drives, Connie rides beside him.

STEVE
*I've been meaning to tell you, I
 have to fly back to Newark
 tomorrow.*

CONNIE
*How long are you gonna be gone
 for?*

STEVE
*I'm gonna make it as quick as
 possible.*

CONNIE
Turn left here.

STEVE
Where is it we're going?

CONNIE

I would ask you to guess, but
there's no way you could get it.

STEVE

So what are we doing? More Rib
Shack action?

CONNIE

We're going somewhere different.
Trust me, you're gonna love it.

STEVE

I'm a little scared. You're not
taking me to a monster truck rally
or something, are you?

INT. ASSISTED LIVING CENTER - REC ROOM - NIGHT

The room is rocking a dozen SENIOR CITIZENS square dance
to the music of

THE MARKLEY BROTHERS

PLAYING on a stage, assisted by a SPRIGHTLY OLD FIDDLER
and AN ELDERLY CALLER who grips a microphone:

CALLER

Swing your partner 'round and
'round, no do-si-do in this town.

STEVE AND CONNIE

move among the dancers. Connie is clearly no stranger to
these hoedowns.

Steve is uptight and trying with Connie's encouragement
he finally begins to loosen up and get into it. He breaks
into a smile.

A SPRY OLD LADY links arms with Steve and practically
throws him off his feet as she spins him around. She
lets go, sending Steve flying.

Connie catches him and pulls him close.

They stare into each other's eyes...

... then KISS for the first time. It's a doozy. Even
the old folks are impressed.

Connie and Steve part.

STEVE
Was that your grandmother?

CONNIE
No, my grandmother passed years
ago.

STEVE
I'm sorry to hear that.

CONNIE
I always visited her here and got
to know everyone. Now I just come
back for fun.

STEVE
That's different. I've never met
anyone who visits an assisted
living home for fun.

CONNIE
Do you know what else would be
fun?

They kiss again. As the SONG ENDS we

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CONNIE'S TRAILER - BEDROOM - DAWN

Connie lies in Steve's arms.

CONNIE
When's your flight?

STEVE
Ten o'clock. I better get going.

He notices her sad expression.

STEVE
What's wrong?

CONNIE
I'll just miss you, that's all.

STEVE
I'll be back in two days.

CONNIE

I know. I just really like having you here. Everybody does. Except Duane, but that's a given.

STEVE

I like being here. Especially with you.

Steve kisses Connie. She moves and the sheet slides off her to reveal a tattoo on her chest, over her heart.

CU shot of Connie's tattoo:

A cardinal with its wings open and feet holding a banner with "Freebird" written in elegant font.

EXT. CONNIE'S TRAILER - DAWN

The door of the trailer opens and a disheveled Steve emerges. He quietly shuts the door.

As he starts to head down the street --

DUANE (O.S.)

She's still my wife, you know.

Steve looks around, confused, then looks up.

Duane sits on top of his trailer, scowling down at Steve.

STEVE

Look, Duane, I don't want any trouble between us.

Duane springs out of his beach chair and drops down onto the ground. He stomps toward Steve, who steps back.

DUANE

You better believe you don't. I see right through you, big shot. I know you're up to no good, and let me tell you -- if you do anything to screw up this town, I'm gonna kick your ass all the way back to New York.

STEVE

New Jersey.

DUANE

I don't care if you're from the
friggin' moon! The point is the
ass-kicking, get it?

The door flies open. Connie comes out, wearing a bathrobe
and brandishing a TABLE LAMP, its cord dangling.

CONNIE

Enough. Leave him alone, Duane.

She realizes both guys are staring at the lamp.

CONNIE

You want me to get into this?

Duane turns back to Steve.

DUANE

You're number one on my shit list
and our little cemetery ran outta
real estate, so why don't you just
get the hell out!

Duane turns and storms into his trailer.

EXT. NEWARK INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

A PLANE lands on the vast sea of tarmac.

INT. NEWARK INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - CONCOURSE - DAY

Steve makes his way through the huge, bustling airport.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Steve stands behind a desk, a laptop open in front of
him. Across the desk sit Bob Henderson and Burton.
Looming behind Burton is CARSON (30s), corporate shark in
training.

Steve gestures to an upward-sloping GRAPH on the laptop.

STEVE

... So as you can see, with the
newly upgraded equipment, we
should be able to double our
output while lowering our
operating expenses by at least ten
percent.

HENDERSON
Well done, Morgan.

Henderson beams like a proud papa.

HENDERSON
It's a damn shame we're going to
have to close the factory anyway.

Henderson's smile disappears. Steve's eyes go wide. He points at the laptop screen, sputtering:

STEVE
Excuse me? This is a good thing,
Henderson, this is a happy graph.

HENDERSON
That's very nice, Morgan, but I'd
prefer to have happy shareholders.
What time is it?

Steve checks his watch. Before he can answer, Carson beats him to it.

CARSON
Twelve o'clock.

HENDERSON
Let's continue this conversation
in my other office, shall we?

EXT. GOLF COURSE - DAY

WHAAACK! A GOLF BALL sails through the air, arcing across the vibrant green course.

Henderson, Burton, Carson and Steve get out of their golf carts at a par 3 tee box. Steve is the only one not dressed for golf -- his jacket and tie are off, sleeves rolled up.

HENDERSON
Sorry, Steve -- it's either the southern Illinois or the North Carolina facility. One of them's got to go.

STEVE
But we're good to go on the retrofit. You saw the numbers.

BURTON

We can do Morgan's retrofit in North Carolina just as easily, and it has the tax breaks. Plus, it's a right-to-work state.

STEVE

I'd still rather keep the Illinois factory operating.

Henderson looks out at the green, then smiles at Burton.

HENDERSON

How about a friendly wager?

He points his club at a FLAGSTICK in the distance.

HENDERSON

Closest to the pin keeps their facility open.

BURTON

You're on.

HENDERSON

But we're not taking the shots.

He gestures to Steve and Carson.

HENDERSON

They are.

Steve and Carson glance at each other. Carson smirks.

STEVE

Oh, for Chrissakes. This is ridiculous. I'm not in.

Carson makes QUIET CLUCKING NOISES.

HENDERSON

That's fine. We'll just close your factory, then. When you make the announcement to your employees, be sure to tell them it's because you didn't have the stones to hit a golf ball.

Carson CLUCKS LOUDER as Steve attempts to respond.

STEVE

Well... I... It's not --

(to Carson)

Would you please shut the hell up?

Steve tees up his ball and lines up his shot. Carson stops clucking.

HENDERSON
It's all you, Steve-O.

STEVE
I'm aware of that, thank you.

He winds up and swings. THWACK!

He shanks it. The ball dribbles across the fairway over into the ROUGH, nowhere near the green.

Burton and Carson bust out laughing. Henderson shakes his head.

CARSON
Thanks for taking the pressure off, buddy.

Carson tees up his ball, lines up and takes his shot.

THWACK! The second ball rockets through the air...

... and drops onto the green, about thirty feet from the hole. Good enough for the win.

Steve's shoulders slump.

HENDERSON
That settles it, Steve. Keep this quiet until the third quarter results are released. The factory closure, that is. Feel free to tell everybody what a crappy golfer you are.

Henderson walks away with Burton, who grins and shrugs at the mortified Steve.

CARSON
Hey, don't sweat it, Steve. It's just a game.

EXT. SOUTHERN ILLINOIS CORNFIELD - DAY

A vast field of corn stalks bend and flutter in the wind.

A tractor drives past.

EXT. CONNIE'S TRAILER - NIGHT

The lights are on.

INT. CONNIE'S TRAILER - DINING AREA - NIGHT

Connie and Steve sit at the kitchen table, PLAYING POKER.

The interior of Connie's double wide trailer is low budget but tasteful.

... Well, tasteful aside from the DEER HEAD mounted to the wall above the kitchen table.

Steve folds his cards. There's something about him that seems distant, preoccupied. Connie notices.

CONNIE

Everything okay?

STEVE

Sure. Why?

CONNIE

You just seem tense.

STEVE

I'm fine. Everything's fine.

Steve points to the deer head.

STEVE

Now this guy, on the other hand --
he's got real problems.

CONNIE

That would be Duane's. I don't know why I keep it around.

(beat)

You know, Steve, I've been thinking about something lately.

STEVE

Uh-oh.

CONNIE

No, no, nothing bad. It's just...

"BIGGER THAN YOURS" BEGINS. Connie gets up and glides across the kitchen floor.

CONNIE

(sung)

*I've got a trailer that's bigger
than yours
I've got a trailer with linoleum
floors
I've got a trailer with a large
carport
A thousand feet from the town
airport
Got nine by nine kitchenette
I found it on the Internet
There's wood paneling and a new
gun rack
Go grab your things and come on
back
Won't you stay with me?
Won't you stay with me?
Please don't try to make up your
mind
Won't you stay with me?
Won't you stay with me?
What you're looking for is not
hard to find*

Connie reaches down, takes Steve's hand and leads him into the LIVING ROOM.

CONNIE

*I've got a trailer with a bay
window
An 8 track player and a radio
Got a color TV and a VCR
A CD player in my muscle car
Got a pickup truck in my front
yard
Got a fishin' boat and life's not
hard
I've got new dry wall and carpet
to boot
And I didn't spend a lot of loot
Won't you stay with me?
Won't you stay with me?
Please don't try to make up your
mind
Won't you stay with me?
Won't you stay with me?
What you're looking for is not
hard to find
Won't you stay with me?
Won't you stay with me?
What you're looking for is not
hard to find*

As the SONG ENDS, Connie leans over and kisses Steve, whose mind is clearly elsewhere.

CONNIE
What do you think?

STEVE
Hmmm?

It's like he hasn't been paying attention at all.

CONNIE
Moving in. What do you think?

STEVE
Ah, you know, it's...

CONNIE
It's what? You've been living in
that roach motel of a trailer for
a month.

STEVE
... It's a big step.

Beat.

CONNIE
So that's "no", right?

STEVE
No!

CONNIE
No, like I'm right it's "no", or
no like I'm wrong that it's "no"?

STEVE
I -- I don't know.

CONNIE
'Cause it definitely didn't sound
like a "yes".

STEVE
I know! Look, I'm sorry, I've got
a lot on my mind right now --

CONNIE
Like what?

STEVE
Stuff.

CONNIE

Stuff, huh? Okay. That's fine.
If you're not ready, I'm not gonna
push you.

STEVE

It's not that, Connie --

CONNIE

Really, it's okay. Maybe we're
rushing things anyway.

STEVE

We're not rushing things. I'll
move in. It's a great idea.
(points to the deer
head)
But that's gotta go.

CUT TO:

EXT. STEVE'S TRAILER - DAY

Steve shoves his belongings into the back of his SUV. He
doesn't notice Red standing behind him watching.

RED

Leaving us already?

STEVE

Yeah, that pot smell in this
trailer really gets into your
clothes.

RED

I still have to charge you for two
whole months.

STEVE

That's fine, Red, I understand.
You're a businessman, you need to
make money.

RED

You ever get that feeling there's
a big change in the air?

STEVE

(thoughtful)
Yeah, sometimes.

RED

People here in Freebird, they
don't like change. They fear
change.

STEVE

Maybe that's why nothing ever
changes here.

RED

I have a feeling a change is
coming whether we like it or not.
Know what I mean?

STEVE

Yeah, I got that notion, too.

RED

Is there something you're not
telling us?

Steve hesitates.

STEVE

I'm bad at golf.

RED

I was never any good either. You
can drop the check in the office
mailbox.

Red walks away.

INT. LAUNDRY AREA - DAY

Tanya and Buzz talk in whispers.

BUZZ

You sure Julio isn't here?

TANYA

Of course I am. He's at work.

BUZZ

Well, hell, I'm supposed to be at
work, and look where I am instead.

TANYA

You stay here for like three
minutes.

BUZZ

Then what? I meet you there?

TANYA

Yeah. We can't be seen going in
together.

BUZZ

This doesn't feel right.

TANYA

Relax. It's gonna be fine.

Tanya walks towards the exit, but Julio suddenly appears in the doorway.

TANYA

Julio.

Buzz's eyes go wide.

BUZZ

Oh, hey, Julio. What's up?

Julio grabs Buzz by the shirt, shoving him outside.

EXT. LAUNDRY AREA - SAME TIME

Buzz stumbles backwards, Julio stalks him.

JULIO

What's up? How 'bout my fist?

Julio winds up to punch the fuck out of Buzz --

-- at least until Tanya steps between the two men.

TANYA

(to Julio)
What are you doing?!

JULIO

What are you doing?!

TANYA

Me? I was about to get to get my laundry out of the dryer before somebody started threatening violence!

JULIO

Well, can you blame me?

Behind Tanya, Buzz mutters:

BUZZ
Not really, to be honest...

JULIO
(to Buzz)
You stay out of this.

TANYA
I can blame you for a lotta
things, Julio!

JULIO
Oh, it's allllllll my fault....

TANYA
Well, how would you like it if
every day I was following you,
interrogating you, making sure you
weren't seeing other chicks?

JULIO
Hell, it would drive me crazy.

TANYA
Exactly! That's what's called a
double standard, Julio!

JULIO
So what do you want me to do?

TANYA
Trust me, baby. All I ever wanted
is for you to trust me.

JULIO
But how am I supposed to trust you
if you're pulling crap like this?

BUZZ
(to Tanya)
He's kinda got you there, Tanya --

TANYA
Shut up, Buzz!
(to Julio)
All I been doing is trying to get
your attention. You're so busy
keeping an eye on me that you
don't see me anymore. And I'm
tired of living that way.

Julio stares at his wife. He suddenly looks drained.

JULIO
I don't wanna lose you, Tanya.

Tanya wraps her arms around Julio's waist.

TANYA
Baby, you're never gonna lose me.
Pretty sure, anyway.

JULIO
I love you so much, Tanya.

TANYA
I love you more, Julio.

They kiss passionately.

Julio picks Tanya up and throws her over his shoulder.
She lets out a WHOOP of delight as Julio carries her
toward their home. The door shuts.

Buzz stands there, completely ignored.

BUZZ
I'm fine, thanks. Don't mind me.

He wanders away.

EXT. CONNIE'S TRAILER - DAY

Connie steps outside, holding the deer head.

She marches down the road to:

EXT. DUANE'S TRAILER - SAME TIME

Connie KNOCKS loud and hard.

CONNIE
Duane? I've got your disgusting
deer corpse.

MORE KNOCKING. No answer.

EXT. MARKLEYS' TRAILER - DAY

The Markley Brothers are jamming as Connie walks by
lugging the deer head.

MARKLEY BROTHER
Ted Nugent rules!

Connie flips them the devil horns.

EXT. MARY LOU'S TRAILER - DAY

Connie stands outside the weather-worn trailer. She KNOCKS.

The door opens, revealing the kimono-clad MARY LOU NICHOLS (late-40s), a brasher, harder, trashier -- but still attractive -- version of her daughter. She takes a long drag on her cigarette.

MARY LOU
Nice deer head.

Connie holds it out for Mary Lou.

CONNIE
Here. I want it out of my home
and Duane's not around to take it.

MARY LOU
I ain't touchin' that thing.

Mary Lou steps aside. Connie slips in.

INT. MARY LOU'S TRAILER - DAY

Connie makes her way through the cramped, messy trailer. Mary Lou watches Connie dump the deer head onto the threadbare couch.

MARY LOU
Guess now I got somebody to watch
Wheel of Fortune with.

CONNIE
I'm not staying.

MARY LOU
I wasn't talking 'bout you.

Mary Lou nudges the deer's snout with the sole of her sandal to make her point.

MARY LOU
Looks like somethin' your daddy
would like.

CONNIE
How would I know? I barely
remember him, thanks to you.

Mary Lou looks a bit thrown off.

CONNIE

Well, maybe Duane will let you
keep it. Seen him lately?

MARY LOU

Here and there.

Beat. Connie looks around as if searching for something else to discuss. Clearly she gives up:

CONNIE

Well, this was terrific fun, Mom,
but I better get going.

MARY LOU

You can stop by any time.

CONNIE

And for some reason, I never seem
to find the time.

MARY LOU

You still pissed about me and
Duane? You gotta get over
yourself, hon.

CONNIE

Really? That's what you think?

MARY LOU

What I think is that you're a damn
fool to let the actions of a
couple of people who had a little
too much to drink one rainy night
ruin the whole rest of your life.
You're acting like your father,
making rash decisions to leave
your marriage, your life, behind.

CONNIE

Mom, as usual you don't know what
you're talking about. That night,
that was just the last straw...

MARY LOU

Then look at it like I was doing
you a favor.

CONNIE

Breaking up my marriage was a
favor?

MARY LOU
He wasn't right for you, Connie.

CONNIE
But he was just right for you.

At the rear of the trailer, the bathroom door opens.
Duane steps out, SHIRTLESS.

He notices Connie. His eyes go wide with shock.

DUANE
Holy crap!

CONNIE
(to Mary Lou)
That figures.

Mary Lou lets out a smoky chuckle. Duane sputters:

DUANE
I was just fixing the sink. Mary
Lou, tell her I was fixing the
sink.

Mary Lou smirks as she fires up another Marlboro.

MARY LOU
Yeah, sure, what he said --
(air quotes)
"Fixing the sink".

DUANE
Damn it, you're not helping!
Honest to God, Connie --

CONNIE
You two deserve each other.

Connie quickly exits the trailer. Duane shoots a furious
look at Mary Lou.

Duane suddenly spots his deer head on the couch. He
stares at it in confusion.

DUANE
Hey, how'd John Deere get here?

MARY LOU
He took an Uber, Duane.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CONNIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Connie cradled in Steve's arms as she sleeps contentedly. Steve's eyes are wide open -- insomnia strikes again.

INT. JULIO AND TANYA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Julio and Tanya are entwined under the covers, kissing passionately as they get into makeup sex.

INT. BUZZ'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Buzz and Duane sit on the couch watching late night TV, drinking beer. The studio audience LAUGHS riotously, but the two guys just stare at the screen, unamused.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. REDBUD MOBILE ESTATES - COMMON AREA - DAY

Connie and Tanya wear swimsuits and drift around in FLOATING CHAIRS in the above-ground pool. Janette and Latisha sit on the splintered wooden deck surrounding the pool, clothed but with their feet dangling in the water. Latisha is giving Janette a manicure.

Buzz ambles past. Tanya waves.

TANYA

Hey, Buzz!

Buzz gives her a quick nod and continues on his way.

TANYA

Crazy what turns guys on. Julio has been so incredibly sweet since he almost beat up Buzz.

CONNIE

I'm sure Buzz will be happy to hear that.

TANYA

Seriously -- it's just like when we first got married except we ain't in high school anymore. In fact, he promised to take me on a second honeymoon to Venus!

They all stare at her blankly.

TANYA

You know, where they have canals instead of streets and these guys with boats paddle you around while they sing opera. What are those things called?

CONNIE

Gondolas.

TANYA

That's it. All I could think of was gonad-something and I knew that wasn't it.

CONNIE

No worries. I got your back.

TANYA

Maybe you'll get a man who'll take you someplace like that someday.

CONNIE

Steve and I have talked a lot about traveling.

TANYA

That's nice.

Judging by the tone of her voice, it's clear she doesn't actually think that.

CONNIE

You got a problem with Steve?

TANYA

Well, let's just say I don't know if you should make any long-term plans with him. That's all.

LATISHA

You gotta be careful. It happened all the time where I lived up in Chicago. Flashy dudes would come around from nicer parts of town. They'd hit on you, spend their money on you, show you a good time. But after they got what they wanted, snap -- they'd disappear faster than Tanya's cheap-ass drugstore dye-job.

TANYA

Well, if you didn't charge so
much...

LATISHA

Just tellin' it like it is.

CONNIE

I don't think Steve is like that.

LATISHA

These rich guys, you got to be
careful they're not just playing
you. Slummin', you know.

JANETTE

If you don't watch yourself, you
could end up like me, all alone in
a trailer with those fussy twins.
Not that I don't love them with
all my heart, I do. I really do.
It's just that life would be a lot
easier if their dads had stuck
around.

LATISHA

Dads? The twins have different
fathers?

JANETTE

It's... complicated.
(sighs heavily)
I better go make sure they're not
setting each other on fire.

Janette gets up and hurries away. Latisha turns to Connie and Tanya and mouths the words "Oh. My. God."

Connie isn't paying attention, lost in her thoughts.

"THEY SAY" BEGINS as the scene takes on a DREAMLIKE VIBE -- the sunlight takes on a magic hour quality, the water sparkles more brightly, Connie seems to glow.

Latisha and Tanya get up and walk away, leaving Connie to float alone in the pool.

CONNIE

*Yes I think I'm falling over you
Yes I think I'm falling over you
Should I care what others say?
Or make up my own mind
If I look to you for love
What is it I will find*
(MORE)

CONNIE (CONT.)

*Yes I think I'm falling over you
 Yes I think I'm falling over you
 A passing fling to amuse yourself
 What am I to you?
 You could be so much more to me
 What am I to do?*

*They say
 They say, don't let it go too far
 They say
 They say, fly high and you'll fall
 hard
 They say
 They say, I'll wind up battle-
 scarred
 They say
 They say*

*Can I be sure that you're for
 real?
 What is it that you think you
 feel?
 Will you leave me all alone,
 someday?*

*They say
 They say, don't let it go too far
 They say
 They say, fly high and you'll fall
 hard
 They say
 They say, I'll wind up battle-
 scarred
 They say
 They say
 They say
 They say*

The SONG ENDS, bringing Connie back to reality.

EXT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

Much like the rest of the landscape, it's seen better days.

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

Latisha pushes an empty cart down an aisle, scanning the shelves. She rounds a corner...

... ramming straight into Buzz, who fumbles the SWANSON DINNER and SIX PACK in his hands.

LATISHA

Oh, I'm sorry!

BUZZ

No worries -- I'm used to getting pushed around.

LATISHA

So I heard. You doing all right?

Buzz shrugs and holds up the six pack.

BUZZ

Ask me again after a few of these.

Latisha cocks her head to look at the Swanson dinner.

LATISHA

That is the saddest excuse for a meal I've ever seen.

BUZZ

Second saddest. I got a month old slice of pizza in my fridge that I'm scared to even touch.

LATISHA

Buzz, Buzz, Buzz... What are we gonna do with you?

BUZZ

Got me, 'Tisha. If you figure it out, let me know.

Latisha smiles. She eyes Buzz a moment.

LATISHA

I'm making jambalaya tonight. Wanna join me?

BUZZ

You cook Cajun! Awesome!

LATISHA

I'm not sayin' it's gonna be good.

BUZZ

Are you kidding? There's no such thing as bad jambalaya.

"CAJUN COOKIN'" BEGINS. The LIGHTING in the supermarket suddenly CHANGES: the harsh, cold fluorescents overhead give way to something warmer and softer, almost like candlelight on a sweltering bayou night.

Buzz and Latisha zip up and down the aisles, grabbing ingredients off the shelves, tossing them into the cart.

BUZZ

*Spoon me up that Cajun stew
Them shrimp, peppers 'n roux
Gimme some, I'm overdue
And I'm so glad you like it, too.*

LATISHA

*I toss in my secret spice
Simmers up mighty nice
On the side, red beans 'n rice
You're in a Cajun paradise*

BUZZ AND LATISHA

*Need somethin' to curl my toes
Ya can't live on mashed potatoes
Get me cookin', anything goes
I'm a hungry man, heaven knows
Oh Cajun Cooking
Cajun Cooking
Cajun Cooking
For the two of us
Oh Cajun Cooking
Cajun Cooking
Cajun Cooking
For the two of us*

EXT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

Buzz and Latisha push the cart out of the store and across the parking lot.

BUZZ

Cajun chef, make a good wife

LATISHA

Them shrimp, peppers 'n roux

BUZZ

Need a little spice in my life

LATISHA

Just dinner, don't misconstrue

As they SING, they reach BUZZ'S RUSTY 70'S CHEVY and load the groceries into the back.

BUZZ AND LATISHA

*Oh Cajun Cooking
Cajun Cooking
Cajun Cooking
For the two of us*

The SONG ENDS, returning us to reality. Buzz smiles at Latisha over the trunk full of groceries.

BUZZ

Hey, 'Tisha, thanks for bein' with me while the shit's hittin' the fan.

LATISHA

The shit is hittin' the fan, isn't it?

BUZZ

Oh, yeah. It sucks.

Buzz takes hold of the hatch, ready to slam it closed. Latisha places her hand over Buzz's.

LATISHA

Forget about it. Let's get cooking.

They shut the hatch together.

INT. FACTORY - STEVE'S OFFICE - DAY

Steve sits at his desk. Julio stands across from him, nervous.

JULIO

I wanted to ask you about some vacation time I'd like to take.

STEVE

Great. What do you have in mind?

JULIO

Last two weeks of September.

Steve's expression darkens.

STEVE

That's almost six months away.

JULIO

I wanna take Tanya to Italy and
figured I'd clear it with you
before we get the tickets and all.

STEVE

Italy.

JULIO

Yeah. We got some money in the
bank and I figure, what the hell --
might as well spend it, right?

Steve chuckles nervously.

STEVE

Right. Maybe you should save that
money. Just in case you need it.

JULIO

We do need it. For Italy.

STEVE

But why commit now? Maybe you'll
change your mind. A lot can
happen in eight months. A lot.

Julio eyes Steve suspiciously.

JULIO

Why are you trying to convince me
not to go to Italy?

STEVE

I'm not trying to convince you not
to go. I'm just saying, maybe
that money could be better spent
elsewhere!

(catches himself)

Okay, that sounded like I'm
telling you not to go.

JULIO

Steve, I mean this in the most
respectful way. Cut the bullshit.

STEVE

Look, Julio, I want to tell you.
But I can't. I mean, I don't want
to tell you, but I should. But I
can't. But I have to. Maybe.
Oh, I don't know.

Steve slumps on his desk. Julio backs toward the door.

JULIO

Okay, you're kinda freaking me out, here...

Steve bolts upright, startling Julio.

STEVE

Screw it. I want everybody on the floor in ten minutes. I have an announcement to make.

INT. FACTORY - FLOOR - DAY

Steve stands in front of the staff as he did earlier in the story. He takes a deep breath.

STEVE

Okay, here's the deal. I'm just going to drop the bomb. We're closing this factory and letting all of you go.

The crowd erupts in BOOS and SHOUTING.

STEVE

Please, let me finish. It's not happening today. I wanted to give you the heads up so you could get your affairs in order, don't make any purchases you might regret, and use this time to start looking for other jobs.

DUANE

Other jobs? I got news for you, Morgan -- there ain't no other jobs around here!

The crowd MURMURS in agreement.

STEVE

Maybe I can get a placement firm in here to help you all with your resumes...

JULIO

Can't you hear? There are no other jobs!

BUZZ

How much time we got?

STEVE
About four weeks. That's two
paychecks, right? Proper notice,

The crowd BOOS again.

STEVE
Look, I'm not even supposed to be
telling you this. So, can I please
ask you to keep it to yourselves
until the public announcement...

Deb (the woman from the Rib Shack parking lot) looks up
from her smart phone.

DEB
Oops.

STEVE
"Oops"? What do you mean, "oops"?

DEB
"Oops", like "oops, I accidentally
just tweeted it."

STEVE
Really? Your fingers just
happened to type --
(grabs phone, reads)
"Freebird factory closing.
Everybody laid off.

DUANE
Hashtag-AgriBIG-sucks".

DEB
(shrugs)
Yeah...?

STEVE
Delete it.

DEB
No. What are you gonna do -- fire
me?

STEVE
Touché.
(to everybody)
You want to hear me say I'm sorry?
Believe me, I am.

DUANE

Right. Now tell us how you had nothing to do with this.

STEVE

Okay, there was a bet on a golf course, but nobody told me I was going up against Tiger Woods.

Duane flips him off and walks out. Steve watches helplessly as the other employees stream out after him.

INT. HENDERSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Henderson works at his desk. He looks up startled, as an enraged Burton bursts into the office.

BURTON

We are in trouble! I just got a call from a reporter at the Sun Times asking me to confirm the Freebird closure.

Henderson blinks, stunned.

HENDERSON

What?! How'd it get out?

BURTON

Somebody idiot at the factory tweeted it and the news went viral. Your boy just totally screwed the Q3 earnings report.

Henderson jumps up and throws on his jacket.

HENDERSON

Is the jet available?

BURTON

Should be. Take Carson with you. You'll need someone as a witness.

Henderson brushes past Burton and storms out of the office.

EXT. CONNIE'S TRAILER - AFTERNOON

Tanya runs toward Connie's trailer, pounds on the door. Connie steps out. Before she can say anything --

TANYA

You bitch! And I thought you were
our friend.

CONNIE

What did I do?

TANYA

You could have told us what your
boyfriend had planned. Now I'm
never gonna to Venus.

CONNIE

I don't understand. What happened?

TANYA

Julio just got home. He said your
boyfriend announced that the
factory's closing. Nobody's got a
job!

CONNIE

What?!

Tanya sees the confusion on Connie's face.

TANYA

You really didn't know? Guess
you're a bigger sucker than I
thought.

Tanya turns to go. She and Connie see Steve approaching.

Tanya saunters over to him.

WHAM! She SLAPS Steve across the face. Steve reels back.

She storms away and after a moment, Steve straightens up
and looks at Connie.

STEVE

I should have told you, but I was
trying to figure out how to even
say it.

Steve shuffles over to Connie, who glares at him from her
doorway.

CONNIE

I feel like such an idiot for
trusting you. Duane was right,
and Lord knows it takes a lot for
me to even say that. You are one
poor excuse for a human being.

STEVE
Connie --

Connie reaches into her trailer and starts throwing Steve's stuff out the door. He stares at it helplessly as it lands at his feet.

EXT. SOUTHERN ILLINOIS AIRPORT - NEXT DAY

A PRIVATE JET lands.

INT. SOUTHERN ILLINOIS AIRPORT - CONCOURSE - DAY

Henderson, dressed in a suit, storms through the same airport as Steve did earlier. Except Steve didn't look ready to kill.

Carson hurries behind him, trying to keep up.

HENDERSON
As soon as we get into town, you get the factory cleared out and lock the gates. I'm going to hunt down Morgan.

INT. SMITTY'S DINER - DAY

Close on Smitty. He's not happy. There's tension in the air.

Connie zips around, delivering meals, picking up plates, and ringing up checks with frightening efficiency. Smitty keeps a watchful eye.

She stops by a booth where Mike and Deb stare out the window.

As Connie puts down two glasses of water, she looks out the window.

CONNIE
They still there?

MIKE
They most certainly are.

THEIR POV - THROUGH THE WINDOW

A handful of PICKUP TRUCKS in a semi-circle in the PARKING LOT of the diner.

Duane, Julio, Buzz and a dozen other factory EMPLOYEES hang out, systematically decimating the CASE OF BEER on the ground.

CONNIE

This is ridiculous.

Connie heads for the exit. Deb watches her go, then nods to Mike.

DEB

This should be good.

She starts tweeting on her phone.

EXT. SMITTY'S DINER - DAY

Connie approaches the gang who sit on tailgates and folding chairs.

CONNIE

Come on, guys -- show some dignity. Smitty's getting pissed. Can't you at least find an empty field or something?

DUANE

We're pretty happy where we are, thanks.

CONNIE

You look like a bunch of assholes tailgating and it's not even game day. What the hell are you doing?

DUANE

Drinking beer.

CONNIE

I can see that, and so can everybody else trying to eat their meal in peace.

Duane shrugs, takes a drink and BELCHES.

CONNIE

You know, you can sit here and get hammered and feel sorry for yourselves all you want --

The guys CHEER and high-five one another. Connie is not amused.

CONNIE

-- but that's not gonna change
things. You gotta do something.

JULIO

Like what?

CONNIE

That's up to you. Think about it.

DUANE

(sighs)

Oh, man, come on -- you know
drinkin' and thinkin' don't mix.

JULIO

(in a girl voice)

What are we gonna do, Duane?

Duane broods for a moment. He finally looks around,
chugs his beer, leaps to his feet, tosses aside the can,
and burps really loud.

DUANE

Let's put the smack down on Steve
Morgan!

This sounds like an excellent idea to the rest of the
guys, who shout:

GROUP

Yeah!

Duane starts up his truck, throws it into gear, hits the
gas --

-- then stops. He leans out the window, looking back at
the other guys.

DUANE

What the hell, am I doing this
alone?!

The guys look at each other. No one seems to have any
intention of getting off their asses.

JULIO

I think you can handle it, Duane.
We'll keep the beer cold.

Duane scowls and PEELS OUT.

EXT. RED'S TRAILER - DAY

Red sits in a lawn chair with his iPad near the steps of his trailer.

Steve's SUV pulls up. His belongings are packed up in the back, just like when he first arrived.

Steve walks up to Red, hands him a check.

STEVE
I'm gonna miss this place.

RED
Kinda grows on ya, doesn't it?

STEVE
Yeah, it does.

RED
Too bad you have to leave under such circumstances.

A Cadillac sedan tears down the trailer park road, SKIDDING to a stop next to Steve.

Steve's eyes go wide as Henderson steps out.

Red sits back to watch the confrontation with the ease of a man accustomed to every kind of hassle.

STEVE
Henderson! What are you doing here?

HENDERSON
Mind telling me what possessed you to break the news to one of your employees?

STEVE
Wasn't just one. I told them all.

Red is impressed with Steve's honesty.

HENDERSON
What the hell were you thinking?

STEVE
I just didn't want them to get blindsided. These people work hard and they deserve better than that.

HENDERSON

Jesus, Steve, if I knew you'd go native, I never would have sent you here in the first place. Next you're gonna tell me you fell in love with the farmer's daughter.

STEVE

Funny you should mention that --

Red chuckles, enjoying the irony.

Henderson throws his hands to the sky.

Their attention is drawn to DUANE'S PICKUP barreling down the road toward them.

INT. DUANE'S TRUCK (MOVING) - SAME TIME

Duane is hellbent for a fight as he grips the steering wheel.

EXT. RED'S TRAILER - SAME TIME

Red, Steve, and Henderson watch as Duane's pickup slides sideways as it stops next to Steve's SUV.

RED

Now this is the kind of drama I'm talking about.

STEVE

Oh, Jeez -- this is all I need.

Duane hops out of the truck and storms over to Steve.

DUANE

This is it, asshole. You might as well dig a hole right now and climb in, 'cause...

HENDERSON

Excuse me, son, we were talking.

Duane notices Henderson, turns back to Steve.

DUANE

Who's this dipshit? Your dad?

HENDERSON

I beg your pardon --

STEVE
 Duane, meet my boss -- and your
 former boss -- Bob Henderson.
 Bob, meet Duane.

Steve smiles wryly.

DUANE
 Your boss...
 (to Henderson)
 So you're the dickweed who's
 shutting down the factory?

HENDERSON
I'm not the one shutting it down.
 It's a corporate decision.

DUANE
 Well corporate ain't here so how
 'bout I kick your ass instead?

HENDERSON
 If you touch me, I swear I'll file
 assault charges. Good luck finding
 another job with that on your
 record.

DUANE
 Brother, the only job I care about
 right now is the one I'm gonna do
 on your face.

Duane raises a fist at Henderson. Steve grabs his arm.

STEVE
 Hold on, Duane. I was just about
 to tell Bob something very
 important.

HENDERSON
 Oh, really? What might that be?

"NOT LIKE YOU" BEGINS. Steve and Duane get in Henderson's
 face, pushing him around the Cadillac as they SING:

STEVE
*Well, I'm angry today, like I've
 never been before
 You'll try to close the factory,
 show our trailer-town the door*

DUANE
*There's people and their families
 dependin' on this work*
 (MORE)

DUANE (CONT.)
*Whose dreams are being sold by
 some overpaid jerk*

STEVE
*Don't tell me, don't you tell me
 the worth of a man
 So what you got in store? Let us
 in on your plan*

DUANE
*You've sold our working souls, we
 got no place to go
 How you sleep at night, that I'll
 never know*

STEVE AND DUANE
*Look at what you do
 I am not like you
 Look at what you do
 I can't be like you
 Look at what you do
 I won't be like you*

Henderson jumps into his rented Caddy and Steve and Duane follow, SINGING. Steve snags the IGNITION KEY from Henderson's hand as Henderson scrambles into the passenger seat.

STEVE
*How many families could you feed,
 with your shiny new Lear jet?
 When you roll up this town what
 kind of jobs you think we'll get?*

DUANE
*It's hard pumpin' gas when there's
 no cars to fill
 You're leavin' us with nothin',
 it's a hard bitter pill*

STEVE AND DUANE
*Look at what you do
 I am not like you
 Look at what you do
 I can't be like you
 Look at what you do
 I won't be like you*

Henderson throws open the passenger door and TUMBLES out. He gets up and attempts to run away, but Steve quickly heads him off. Duane comes up behind him.

Red joins them, flanking Henderson from the side.

RED

*Your stocks and your Cadillac, do
they take you way up there?*

Steve tosses the ignition key back to Henderson.

DUANE

*Do you ever even think of us, do
you even care?*

STEVE

*Pissin' on the workin' man, that's
how you succeed*

DUANE

*All so you can downsize us and up
your corporate greed*

STEVE, RED, AND DUANE

*Look at what you do
I am not like you
Look at what you do
I won't be like you
Look at what you do
Never be like you*

The SONG ENDS. Red sits back down in his chair. Henderson is unimpressed. Duane, on the other hand, lets out a WHOOP.

DUANE

*Hell, yeah, brother -- maybe
you're not a spineless weasel
after all. Punch it in!*

Duane and Steve bump fists.

HENDERSON

*Am I to take that as your
resignation?*

STEVE

You are.

HENDERSON

*Thanks. You saved me the trouble
of firing you. Carson's at the
factory right now, clearing out
the workers to lock it up.*

STEVE

*A lockout? Why? These people need
those last two checks.*

HENDERSON

We have to make sure this town's trailer trash doesn't get in there and vandalize the equipment.

DUANE

WHAT!?

HENDERSON

You heard me, loser.

DUANE

Okay, that does it --

Duane lunges forward to attack Henderson but Steve steps between them to hold him back.

STEVE

Don't do it, Duane. He's not worth it.

DUANE

Yeah, but I'll have a great time finding that out.

HENDERSON

You know what, Steve? There are two kinds of people in the world -- makers and takers; winners, losers. I'm a maker. Take a guess which one you are? Losers, both of you.

STEVE

You know what? I changed my mind.
(to Duane)
Go get him, dude.

Steve lets go of Duane, who charges after Henderson.

Duane tackles Henderson and punches the hell out of him on the ground.

Henderson pushes Duane off him and stands up. Steve turns him around and punches him in the mouth.

The fight shuffles from Red's trailer to:

JANETTE'S TRAILER

The front door swings open and Janette jumps out onto her steps.

The TWINS, about three years old, step in the doorway. One twin is blonde with blue eyes, the other is dark skinned with a fro.

JANETTE
What's goin' on out here?!

Duane wrangles Henderson's arms into a hold.

DUANE
Get'im, Steve!

Steve gets a shot in before a Markley Brother pushes him and Henderson apart.

HENDERSON
Who're you?

MARKLEY BROTHER
The Prince of Darkness.

Henderson scrambles away from Duane and Markley, into his Cadillac, and slams the door as Duane pounds on the window.

DUANE
Get out of that car, chickenshit!

Henderson swings the Cadillac around, rolls the passenger window down next to Duane.

HENDERSON
Loser!

Duane looks around and punches the only thing nearby: a life-sized FLAMINGO staked out in JANETTE'S FRONT YARD. It flies head first through the Cadillac's open window and lands with its feet pointed out.

JANETTE
Aw, c'mon, Duane -- I just got
that last week!

DUANE
Sorry, I'll replace it.

Henderson fires it up and PEELS OUT. Duane leaps out of the way. He and Steve watch the car roar down the road and out of their lives forever.

MARKLEY BROTHER
He didn't read the sign.

The Markley Brother walks away.

STEVE

What sign?

RED

No suits.

Janette goes back in her trailer, muttering to herself.

Duane turns to Steve.

DUANE

Bunch of us are drinkin' in the parking lot of the diner. Wanna join us? We don't got anything fancy for you, but hell, after few cans of Pabst Blue Ribbon, you won't be feelin' nothing anyway.

As Duane and Steve climb in Duane's pick-up truck, Red pulls out his iPhone.

RED

(talk to text)

Deb, turns out, Steve Morgan's not the bad guy, afterall. Spread the word.

EXT. SMITTY'S DINER PARKING LOT - EARLY EVENING

A few more pick-up trucks have joined the semi-circle of tailgaters drinking in the parking lot.

INT. SMITTY'S DINER - DAY

At a booth, Mike finishes his last bit of fries while Deb focuses on texting.

DEB

And sent.

Across the dining room:

Mary Lou sits at a booth by herself, reading Deb's text. She looks at Deb and gives her a thumbs up.

Connie wanders over, not pleased to see her mother.

CONNIE

What do you want?

MARY LOU
A mother-daughter truce, but I'll
settle for a tuna melt.

CONNIE
One tuna melt coming right up.

Connie jots it down and turns to go.

MARY LOU
Heard you dumped your new man.
Wanna talk about it?

CONNIE
You're about the last person I
want to talk to about it.

Mary Lou stares at Connie, giving her the guilt-laden Mom Look.

Connie finally succumbs and slides into the booth,
SIGHING. She glances at the KITCHEN WINDOW.

CONNIE
Smitty's gonna kill me.

MARY LOU
He'll have to go through me first.
So -- what happened?

CONNIE
They're closing the factory, Mom.
Steve sold us out.

MARY LOU
Maybe he was just doing his
job. You gonna blame a fish for
swimming?

CONNIE
What do you mean?

MARY LOU
Everybody's got a story, and
everybody's got a reason. Bet you
didn't even bother listening when
he tried to explain himself.

Before Connie can answer, Smitty appears in the kitchen window and spots Connie sitting with Mary Lou.

SMITTY
Get to work, Connie. I ain't
paying you to socialize.

MARY LOU
Zip it, Smitty. We're having a
moment.

Smitty disappears from the window, MUTTERING to himself.
Mary Lou turns back to Connie.

MARY LOU
Anyway, I know am I right about
Steve.

CONNIE
Must be a real nice view from up
on your high horse, Mom.

MARY LOU
I ain't saying I'm perfect. Lord
knows I've done plenty of dumb
things in my life.

CONNIE
Like sleeping with my husband?

MARY LOU
That would be one, yes. Breaking
up my marriage would be another.

Connie's expression changes. Never heard this before.

CONNIE
You always said Daddy left us.

MARY LOU
Oh, he left, all right -- with my
foot halfway up his you-know-what.

CONNIE
Why?

MARY LOU
I had my reasons. And you know
what? I can't even remember 'em
anymore. He wasn't a drunk.
Never cheated or laid a hand on
me. Snored like a busted
chainsaw, but that wasn't the
problem. Whatever it was that
seemed like such a deal-breaker to
me back then... it's gone forever.
And your father with it.

CONNIE
Are you sorry?

For the first time, Mary Lou drops her guard: her usual bemused sarcasm gives way to sadness. She looks tired.

MARY LOU

Darlin', not a day goes by that I
don't think about what I threw
away. Do you love Steve?

CONNIE

Yes, more than I ever loved any
guy.

Connie nods. Mary Lou leans across the table, taking her daughter's hands.

MARY LOU

Then don't let him go.

EXT. SMITTY'S PARKING LOT - EARLY EVENING

The tailgaters are several beers in. They murmur to each other as:

Duane's truck pulls up with Steve riding shotgun.

JULIO

Yo! What the hell is this?

The puzzled group approach the truck as Steve gets out.

DUANE

War makes strange bedfellows. Not
that we're going to bed. That's
just an old sayin...

A tap on Steve's shoulder startles him. He whirls around to find Connie standing there.

She pulls him into a tight hug.

CONNIE

I'm so sorry about what I said
earlier.

STEVE

I deserved it.

CONNIE

You're not a poor excuse for a
human being.

STEVE

I should have told you. I kept thinking I could save the day somehow. You see how that turned out.

(sighs)

I should pick up a bottle of Jimmie's rib sauce for the road. At least I'll have the taste of Freebird in New Jersey.

A mental light bulb goes on for Connie.

CONNIE

You just gave me an idea! You can't leave, Steve.

INT. SMITTY'S DINER - SAME TIME

Mary Lou watches through the window. She smiles, both pleased and relieved.

EXT. REDBUD MOBILE ESTATES - COMMON AREA - EVENING

It's a town meeting: practically every resident of Redbud Mobile Estates is present, from Red and Janette to Julio and Tanya to Latisha and Buzz to Rib Shack Jimmie and the Markley Brothers to Mary Lou and Duane.

STEVE

Thanks for coming out. As you know, your community -- our community -- is facing an employment challenge right now.

CONNIE

Steve and I have an idea. Jimmie and I have always talked about how much better he could do if he had a big restaurant out by the interstate --

JIMMIE

Damn straight!

CONNIE

So what if we really did it?

The crowd MURMURS, perplexed.

JIMMIE

Really?

CONNIE

Really. Imagine an awesome roadhouse where people could stop and get some good food --

JIMMIE

--Ribs! And potato salad, greens, and my famous mac and cheese!

STEVE

Exactly, but not just your culinary delights. We could sell Latisha's gumbo, too.

BUZZ

I can testify.

CONNIE

We'll have all our local, homegrown cuisine. With local music playing every night.

MARKLEY BROTHER

If The Cozy Chicks' custard quiche is not on that menu, you can count us out!

A couple Cozy Chicks wave and smile.

Julio raises his hand.

JULIO

I hate to be the one to piss in y'all's Corn Flakes, but this sounds awfully expensive. Where would we be doing this at?

Steve steps forward.

STEVE

We'll turn the factory into a roadhouse.

The logic starts to sink in and the folks nod in agreement.

CONNIE

It's right off the interstate. It's got a big parking lot for truckers.

RED

There's a grove of trees out back where we can put some trailers to rent to travelers passing through on the interstate. You know, like an RV park for people who have to come from a long ways away cuz the food's so good!

STEVE

The company's going to clear out any equipment they can sell and put the building up for sale. If we're willing to take it as-is, they'd probably sell us the property for next to nothing.

JULIO

Okay, but now we're back to the money question. What do we use to pay for it all, man? Good vibes?

Steve and Connie exchange glances. Steve turns back to the assembly.

STEVE

Well, we were thinking, what if we all pitched in our savings? Cashed in our investments? All of us, we can be partners.

The crowd grumbles, not really on board.

BUZZ

Investments? Man, I can barely make rent.

Julio takes Tanya's hand. They stand up to go.

JULIO

I can't believe we're missing Jeopardy for this...

LATISHA

You really think if we all chipped in, we could afford a factory?

CONNIE

It's worth a shot.

Julio and Tanya start moving. More residents begin to get up and drift away.

Red stands up -- but doesn't leave. Instead he declares:

RED
I'll pay for it.

Everybody stops. They stare at Red.

JULIO
Excuse me?

RED
As you may know, I used my
settlement money from the factory
to buy Redbud. What you don't know
is I invested the rest.

CONNIE
What did you invest in?

RED
Google. Bought a few thousand
shares when they went public, then
cashed out when the stock was up
1,700%.

The crowd MURMURS, stunned.

BUZZ
I have no idea what any of that
means, but it sounds impressive.

STEVE
Damn, Red!

RED
(shrugs)
Yeah, the money's just sitting
there in the bank. What am I gonna
do, buy an island and hire a bunch
of strippers to keep me company?

BUZZ
That doesn't sound too bad,
actually.

The other guys in the crowd nod in agreement.

RED
In theory, yes - in practice, not
so much. Anyway, I'd rather spend
it on something worthwhile. Like
this. Not to get all sentimental,
but you folks are my only family.
I'd do anything for you.

LATISHA
(Fanning her face)
I'm getting the vapors.

RED
I got one condition, though --
everybody's gotta do their part.
We do this, we're in it together.

Steve and Connie turn to the crowd.

STEVE
Well? Sounds fair to me.

One by one, everybody nods and mutters their agreements.

Red walks over to Steve and Connie -- HE'S NOT LIMPING.

STEVE
Red, you're not limping.

Red stops. He looks down at his legs.

RED
I'm not? Thank the lord! It's,
uh... a miracle.

CONNIE
You've been faking this whole
time, haven't you?

Red smiles. Busted.

RED
I prefer to think of it as
exaggerating for insurance
purposes. In any case --

Red tosses aside his cane and sticks out his hand.

RED
Congratulations, partner.

Steve takes his hand. "FOR THE FIRST TIME" BEGINS as we

CUT TO:

INT. FREEBIRD LOCAL BANK OFFICE - DAY

A MONTAGE BEGINS. Steve and Connie sit at a desk, signing
closing papers in front of Carson and a REAL ESTATE
LAWYER. Red sits nearby patiently.

STEVE

*For the first time, I can breathe
again
I look around and all I see are
friends*

STEVE AND CONNIE

*What came before is now long gone
We'll take a chance and face the
dawn*

EXT. FACTORY - DAY

Steve and Connie watch as WORKERS disassemble and haul OLD PROCESSING EQUIPMENT out of the factory, loading it into SEVERAL LARGE TRUCKS parked out front.

VARIOUS CHARACTERS

*For the first time, I open up my
eyes
And say hello instead of sad
goodbyes*

INT. CONNIE'S TRAILER - DAY

Red, Steve, Connie, Duane sit around a table, looking at ROADHOUSE BLUEPRINTS laid out in front of them.

VARIOUS

*This road is not a dead end
The future's right around the bend*

INT. FACTORY - DAY

Julio, Duane, Buzz and all of the other factory workers demo the now empty factory -- taking down walls, removing piping and stripping concrete.

VARIOUS

*We're gonna rise again
We'll win but we're not sure when
We're gonna rise again-yes we are...
yes we are*

INT. FACTORY - THE NEW KITCHEN - THREE MONTHS LATER

Buzz and the guys lug A DEEP FRYER, OVEN and OTHER KITCHEN EQUIPMENT in as Jimmie directs them. Janette stands beside him, clipboard in hand and taking notes.

VARIOUS

*For the first time, we will be in
charge
If it goes well, we'll be livin'
large
No more lies no double-cross
From now on we'll be the boss
We're gonna rise again
Hallelujah amen
We're gonna rise again
yes we are... yes we are*

INT. FACTORY - DAY

Red and Steve stand around, watching Duane and the Markleys put the STAGE together at one end of the new joint.

VARIOUS

*For the first time, we're showing
our grit
For the first time, we'll never
say quit
For the first time, we won't
disappoint
For the first time, we're gonna
rock this joint*

INT. FACTORY - LATER - DAY

Steve, Buzz and several guys paint the walls as Julio, Duane and several others drag tables into the factory.

The Markley Brothers set up their gear on the stage.

Steve stops to take in the sight of everybody working. He takes a deep breath, satisfied.

VARIOUS

*For the first time, gonna take
that bet
Odds aren't good but we're not
done yet
Slipped the chains of corporate
brass
With dreams so real within our
grasp
We're gonna rise again
Hallelujah amen
We're gonna win again-yes we are...
yes we are*

The SONG and the MONTAGE END.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROAD - DUSK

A SINGLE CAR drives down the long, flat, deserted highway, headlights on as the sun sets.

It turns off the road into

THE REDBUD ROADHOUSE PARKING LOT

It's PACKED WITH CARS, TRUCKS, and RV's. PEOPLE stream in and out of the building, which now sports a GIANT NEON SIGN that reads: "REDBUD ROADHOUSE".

With the sunset splashing across the sky behind it, the place looks strangely, unexpectedly beautiful.

INT. REDBUD ROADHOUSE - KITCHEN - DUSK

The staff moves like a well-oiled machine as SERVERS dart back and forth, picking up orders from the COOKS prepping the food as fast as they can.

Jimmie slaves over a pan of ribs as Janette -- wearing a waitress uniform -- hurries over.

JANETTE

Table fifteen asked for extra sauce. Should we charge 'em?

JIMMIE

Of course not!

Jimmie hands Janette a cup of rib sauce and winks at her.

Janette walks away.

JIMMIE

That woman's a few tacos short of a fiesta platter.

Latisha stands next to a GIANT POT OF GUMBO. Buzz ladles out some gumbo into a bowl and hands it to her, watching nervously as she tries it.

She savors the stew, rolling it around her palate before finally swallowing.

LATISHA
Perfect. You're a fast learner.

Buzz beams. Julio -- dressed as a waiter -- hurries past.

BUZZ
Everything okay?

LATISHA
Couldn't be better, sugar.

LATISHA smiles at Buzz, smacks him on the ass and turns back to the stove. Buzz makes his way out of the kitchen into:

THE MAIN ROOM -

The room is hopping, packed with CUSTOMERS dining and dancing as the Markley Brothers PLAY "Freebird" onstage.

Among the dancers are the spry OLD LADY and square dancing CALLER from the assisted living room.

What was once a grim industrial workplace has been transformed into a cool, quirky dining gigantic establishment with atmosphere and attitude to spare.

In a word, it's awesome.

Steve wanders from table to table, greeting CUSTOMERS. Buzz claps Steve on the shoulder, then points to:

Connie stands by the side of the stage, gesturing for Steve to come over. He nods and heads that way.

As Steve makes his way through the crowd, we see: Red and Mary Lou sit at tables marked "RESERVED."

The Markleys FINISH THEIR SONG. The CROWD HOOTS AND APPLAUDS.

Steve and Connie take the stage. They step up to the microphone as the band hangs back.

CONNIE
Good evening everyone! Having a good time?

The CROWD CHEERS.

CONNIE

Great. I'm Connie Nichols, the General Manager of the Freedbird Roadhouse, and this is Steve Morgan, the other General Manager. We just wanted to thank all of you for joining us tonight.

STEVE

And thanks to all our co-owners and friends who worked so hard to get this joint up and running. You're the best!

MORE APPLAUSE.

CONNIE

You know, one of the advantages of running the place is that the band will let us get up here and make fools of ourselves. So I hope you can all indulge us for a few minutes while we sing a little song that means a lot to us.

Steve nods to the band. They launch into "MOBILIZED":

STEVE AND CONNIE

*We're mobilized
Now we're energized
That's why we're mobilized
Mobilized*

IN THE KITCHEN:

Jimmie prepares a line of plates with food. Buzz boxes up a to-go order and hands it to

Duane -- dressed as a waiter -- who rushes off to:

THE MAIN ROOM

Duane moves past the stage to the hostess podium where Tanya takes down a phone order.

STEVE

*Well, I started my life in a small town
And I thought I'd gotten away
But now I've fallen for something else
Stayin' put, but I'm on my way*

Duane walks by a GROUP waiting to be seated and out the front doors.

EXT. REDBUD ROADHOUSE - SAME TIME

Duane passes through the packed parking lot to:

THE RV PARK

RVs are parked and set for a night of camping.

A COUPLE sit in lounge chairs watching the sunset.

STEVE

*Don't talk to me about livin'
free, 'cause I think I've done it
all
I'm leavin' the road for something
new
And we're gonna have a ball*

Duane delivers the to-go order to the Couple.

INT. REDBUD ROADHOUSE - SAME TIME

As Steve and Connie sing,

Latisha, Red, Duane, Buzz, Julio, Jimmie, Janette, Tanya, and Mary Lou join in singing from their locations:

MAIN ROOM:

Tanya seats a GROUP.

Julio and Janette carry plates and serve.

Buzz busses dishes.

Red and Mary Lou seated.

KITCHEN:

Latisha and Jimmie cook gumbo and ribs.

EXT. REDBUD ROADHOUSE - PARKING LOT - SAME TIME

Duane walks between the cars, singing. He walks in the front door of the building.

FULL GROUP
*That's why we're mobilized
Not victimized
We're mobilized
Mobilized*

INT. REDBUD ROADHOUSE - SAME TIME

CONNIE AND STEVE
*We didn't want to spend another
second here
Just enough time to finish this
beer
We don't need none of this
downsize stress
So we're movin' our belongings to
a shared address*

CONNIE
*All my friends thought I was crazy
We almost parted ways
But now I couldn't be happier
In our trailer daze.*

Shots through the Redbud Roadhouse of the full group singing.

ALL
*Yeah, we're mobilized
Now we're privatized
And we're romanticized
Mobilized, mobilized, mobilized*

The SONG ENDS. Steve and Connie embrace and kiss as the CROWD CHEERS. Connie looks at Steve and smiles.

CONNIE
Don't quit your day job, honey.

STEVE
Wouldn't dream of it.

They kiss again as the BAND STARTS UP BEHIND THEM.

FADE OUT.

THE END