

LUST 'n RUST

by  
Jason Nutt

Original stage play by  
Frank Haney, Carol Kimball & Dave Stratton

Contact:  
Penelope Spheeris  
Tom Martin

---

[tom@design-1-1.com](mailto:tom@design-1-1.com)  
310 777 0408

Legal representation:

Brad Auerbach  
[Brad@BradAuerbach.com](mailto:Brad@BradAuerbach.com)

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 kids 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  
quarrells.

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  
might 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 thumbin' 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

Mmmmmmm... 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 alllllllll 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

--Ribbs! 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 buses 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