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THE BEST LITTLE WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS

Revised Final Draft Screenplay

by

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THE BEST LITTLE WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS

## 1      OPENING TITLE CARDS

1

After the Universal logo, we open on a slow pan across a turn-of-the-century dressing table. We see old photographs showing a small group of whores with their madam, MISS WULLA JEAN, and the Sheriff of the small town of Gilbert, SHERIFF JACK ROY WALLACE. There are also mementos on the dressing table: a watch, reading glasses, a jeweled hand mirror, a hair brush, etc. We play the "Production Company", the "Miller-Milkis-Boyett Presents" and the "Film By" credits over these things and then push in on an antique stereopticon with the double photo image of a small, newly built, two-story Victorian house situated on a wooded hill in the East Texas countryside.

2      The two images optically move together to form one image. They become live action and the NARRATOR begins as we push in on the house where a horse and wagon is pulling up to the porch. 2

## NARRATOR

It was the nicest little whorehouse you ever saw. It lay about a mile outside the city limits.

3      EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - DAY - 1910

3

Sheriff Jack Roy Wallace and Miss Wulla Jean pose with the girls on the front porch of the house as a photographer takes their picture with an old flash-powder camera.

## NARRATOR

Sheriff Jack Roy Wallace picked it out for Miss Wulla Jean and her girls in 1910 when they moved there from over the hardware store on Main Street.

We pan down through the leaves of a tree to reveal two girls working in a little garden by the side of the house. It has the appearance of a turn-of-the-century ladies college as the other girls cut flowers, sit around the grape arbor and sun-dry their long hair.

(NOTE: We can bleed in the color slowly beginning with black and white, then sepia, then full color during the 1940's.)

CONTINUED

3 CONTINUED

3

NARRATOR

(singing)

Oh, the little house lay in a  
Green Texas glade  
Where the trees were as coolin'  
As fresh lemonade  
Soft summer wind  
Had a trace of perfume  
And a fan was turnin'  
In every room.

4 INT. CHICKEN RANCH - DAY - 1900

4

We see the old ceiling fans turning, followed by several shots through the fans of the girls making love under the sheets, squeaking mattress shots, bouncing bedsprings, with a chamber pot under the bed.

CHORUS

Twenty fans were turnin'  
They were turnin'  
Twenty fans were turnin'  
In every room  
Fevers were a-burnin'  
They were burnin'  
And they had to have  
A way to cool down.

5 INT. CHICKEN RANCH - NIGHT - 1914

5

Miss Wulla Jean stands at the front door welcoming customers entering the house. We see the keys of a pianola start playing ragtime as the girls and customers break into a turn-of-the-century-style dance.

NARRATOR

Miss Wulla Jean had a strict set of rules but she liked her ladies, as she called them, to treat her customers real good.

The dancing continues, as Miss Wulla Jean makes sure her girls are behaving in a ladylike way.

NARRATOR

She put a pianola in the parlor to sorta help break the ice. A feller could ask a girl to dance or if he held back a little, she'd ask him. And pretty soon they'd get a little business going -- two dollars worth.

The dance ends with a couple upstairs falling into bed.

6 EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - NIGHT - 1914 6

Doughboys are coming and going.

NARRATOR

By the First World War, it was one  
of the better-known pleasure  
palaces in all Texas.

7 INT. CHICKEN RANCH KITCHEN - DAY - 1914 7

A girl takes a cookie sheet from the kitchen oven and walks  
out to the garden.

NARRATOR

And as the girls baked cookies....

8 EXT. CHICKEN RANCH GARDEN - DAY - 1914 8

The girl passes by other girls knitting socks, packing  
cookies, writing letters and wrapping bandages for the Red  
Cross.

NARRATOR

...and knitted socks for the guys  
at the front, the soldiers there  
bragged of the little house back  
home.

MALE CHORUS

(singing)

It had nice watermelons  
All covered with vines  
And a vegetable garden  
A few slender pines  
White painted fence  
With the roses in bloom  
And a fan was turnin'  
In every room.

9 INT. A ROOM IN THE CHICKEN RANCH - NIGHT - 1918 9

A girl is washing a DOUGHBOY'S privates in a hand basin.

NARRATOR

Miss Wulla Jean insisted that each  
girl check her customer real good  
for the clap and wash him off with  
soap and warm water. Some of the  
fellas claimed that was the best  
part.

CONTINUED

9

CONTINUED

9

DOUGHBOY

Oooooweeeeh!

The Doughboy takes off his hat and throws it off screen right.

10

INT. CHICKEN RANCH PARLOR - DAY - 1920

10

The hat (now a straw boater) lands on a hat tree standing in the parlor. The Doughboy (now with longer hair) is welcomed by Wulla Jean at the front door.

11

INT. CHICKEN RANCH PARLOR - NIGHT - 1920

11

We pull back from a new phonograph to reveal couples dancing around it -- letter-sweatered college boys and bow-tied businessmen.

NARRATOR

When the war ended, Miss Wulla Jean celebrated with a new phonograph in the parlor.

The girls Charleston with their customers and we intercut with the bouncing beds upstairs.

12

INT. AN UPSTAIRS ROOM IN THE CHICKEN RANCH - DAY - 1920

12

A half-dressed couple ends the dance by kicking the door closed. The music fades out and a plaintive harmonica takes over. We pan to an open window and see the dilapidated grape arbor, while wind and dust blow across the landscape.

NARRATOR

But prosperity blew away like a dust storm and in came the Hoover Depression.

13

EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - DAY - 1930'S

13

Extreme long shot of the little house looking very bleak. A hot, dusty wind is blowing as an old, broken-down car makes its way down the long drive away from the house.

14

INT. A ROOM IN THE CHICKEN RANCH - DAY - 1930'S

14

A GIRL shuts the window, closing out the blowing wind. She turns to a young farmer, who is carrying a gunny sack.

CONTINUED

14

CONTINUED

14

GIRL

Now, I'm sorry, honey. I gotta have my three dollars first. Miss Wulla Jean don't allow no honeyfuggin' 'til I pay my rent.

The farmer picks up the sack and reaches inside.

NARRATOR

It wasn't always easy to come up with three dollars, especially during the hard times.

The farmer pulls a chicken out of the bag and holds it up proudly for barter. The Girl sighs:

GIRL

Well, you just keep that in the bag and I'll take it out back soon as we're finished.

15

INT. CHICKEN RANCH PARLOR - NIGHT - 1930'S

15

We see some girls accepting payment from three farmers with chickens on their laps.

NARRATOR

And so the girls began accepting poultry in trade -- one bird, one lay....

16

EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - DAY - 1930'S

16

The girls are feeding the chickens and as we pull back we see they have built a temporary pen full of several hundred birds.

NARRATOR

And that's how the place got its name -- The Chicken Ranch!

17

INT. CHICKEN RANCH PARLOR - NIGHT - 1940'S

17

The camera pulls back from the new jukebox where couples are jitterbugging around it to a big band sound.

Miss Wulla Jean nails up a wartime portrait of F.D.R. in the hallway.

A bugle calls and upstairs a young customer jumps out of bed.

The girls and their guests, now dressed in World War II uniforms, dance down the steps and out the front door.

- 18 INT. CHICKEN RANCH KITCHEN - DAY - 1940'S 18  
In a replay of the 1914 cookie-baking sequence, a girl takes a cookie sheet from the oven and walks outside.
- 19 EXT. CHICKEN RANCH GARDEN - DAY - 1940'S 19  
Out in the victory garden, the girls, thirty years later, are still doing their patriotic bit for the boys at the front. One of the girls, sealing a letter with a lipstick kiss, turns off-screen at the sound of an approaching car.
- 20 EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - DAY - 1950'S 20  
Fifties-style music accompanies the arrival of a convertible full of crew cut college boys. They pull up to the porch as a young black woman called JEWEL waves them a welcome.
- 21 INT. CHICKEN RANCH - DAY - 1950'S 21  
Jewel takes the boys' money and they file through the front door joining other customers dancing rock and roll in the parlor. Miss Wulla Jean is replacing Truman's picture with Eisenhower's.
- 22 INT. A ROOM IN THE CHICKEN RANCH - NIGHT - 1950'S 22  
Three guys, careful to keep their ducktail hairdos neatly combed, dance with their girls and somersault them into bed.
- 23 INT. CHICKEN RANCH - DAY - 1960'S 23  
Jewel passes a portrait of Kennedy as she walks over to Sheriff Jack Roy and his deputies leaving with two low-life characters they have just arrested. Miss Wulla Jean congratulates him, while in the parlor customers dance to the jukebox.
- 24 INT. CHICKEN RANCH - DAY - 1960'S 24  
Jewel and Miss Wulla Jean are at the "Presidential Wall" taking down the picture of L.B.J. Miss Wulla Jean ages from standing with a cane to sitting in a wheelchair while we see cuts of Jewel putting up Nixon and taking him down, putting up Ford and taking him down, and then finally, at Miss Wulla Jean's insistence, putting up L.B.J. to be nailed to the wall and left there permanently.

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24

CONTINUED

24

## NARRATOR

For over three generations the little house went about its business while the town prospered, and those folks that couldn't approve of the Chicken Ranch at least decided it fell under the principle of peaceful coexistence.

Miss Wulla Jean nods with satisfaction at her favorite Texas president, puts down her stereopticon on the hall table and Jewel wheels her away. We push in on the stereopticon and see it contains the old sepia shot of the little house taken so many long years ago.

## NARRATOR

Course, if you grew up anywhere in Texas, you knew at an early age that they were selling something out there other than poultry.

25

EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - DAY - PRESENT

25

The helicopter shot. As we swoop across the countryside and up toward the little house on the hill, the music becomes wilder and picks up speed. Two cars, a farmer's pickup and an Army jeep are flying up the old dirt road to the front of the house.

## CHORUS

Twenty fans were turnin'  
They were turnin'  
Twenty fans were turnin'  
In every room  
Fevers were a-burnin'  
They were burnin'  
And they had to have  
A way to cool down.

26

INT. CHICKEN RANCH - DAY - PRESENT

26

The customers come in the door and, grabbing the girls, do the Texas Twist dance through the house.

## CHORUS

Twenty fans were hummin'  
They were hummin'  
Twenty fans were hummin'  
In every room  
Customers were comin'  
They were comin'  
And they had to have  
A way to cool down.



27 EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - NIGHT - PRESENT

27

Customers and girls dance in the open back courtyard, while upstairs fans are turning at a faster speed and the beds are bouncing to their rhythm.

CHORUS

Twenty fans were turnin'  
They were turnin'  
Twenty fans were turnin'  
In every room.  
Fevers were a-burnin'  
They were burnin'  
And they had to have  
A way to cool down.

28 EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - SUNRISE - PRESENT

28

The satisfied customers are leaving, getting into the collegiate Volkswagons and executive Pontiacs.

JEWEL

Y'all come back now, hear?

The customers respond to Jewel's cry as if asked for an encore, and so...they turn and run into the house, nearly knocking Jewel over in the process.

29 INT. CHICKEN RANCH - VARIOUS ROOMS - NIGHT - PRESENT

29

The music doubles in tempo and so do the fans. A montage of fun filled sexual shenanigans, cutting from the dancing in the parlor to the bouncing beds upstairs.

CHORUS

Twenty fans were turnin'  
They were turnin'  
Twenty fans were turnin'  
In every room  
Fevers were a-burnin'  
They were burnin'  
And they had to have  
A way to cool down.

Twenty fans were hummin'  
They were hummin'  
Twenty fans were hummin'  
In every room.  
Customers were comin'  
They were comin'  
And they had to have  
A way to cool down.

30 INT. A ROOM IN THE CHICKEN RANCH - DAWN 30

A cowboy, still wearing his hat in bed, is ecstatically coming to a climax.

31 EXT. A ROOM IN THE CHICKEN RANCH - DAWN 31

His shadow is silhouetted on the window shade and we hear his excited voice.

VOICE

I'm comin'! I'm comin'! Thank  
you. Thank you, Jesus.

We pan off the window up to the metal rooster weather vane on the roof and as the morning sun breaks across the horizon, the names of our stars flash across the screen....

Burt Reynolds...  
Dolly Parton...  
The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas!

32 EXT. MISCELLANEOUS SHOTS OF TEXAS - DAY 32

The rest of the Main Title Credits play over beautiful vistas of the East Texas countryside while the orchestra gives a zippy taste of some of the songs to come.

33 EXT. GILBERT COURTHOUSE - DAY 33

We pan down from the sky, past the Texas flag and take a full shot of the Gilbert town square.

NARRATOR

When Sheriff Jack Roy Wallace  
retired, about ten years ago now,  
Deputy Ed Earl Dodd was elected to  
the job. Everybody likes Ed Earl....

34 EXT. POINDEXTER'S USED CAR LOT - DAY 34

The mayor, RUFUS P. POINDEXTER, is showing a car to a potential customer while the customer's wife kicks the tires.

CONTINUED

34 CONTINUED

34

NARRATOR

The mayor, Rufus P. Poindexter, leans on him to keep the town running peacefully....

35 INT. GILBERT GAZETTE OFFICES - DAY

35

EDSEL MACKEY is pulling the proof pages off the presses.

NARRATOR

Edsel Mackey, the editor of the Gilbert Gazette, has supported Ed Earl in every campaign....

36 INT. DULCIE MAE'S CAFE - DAY

36

DULCIE MAE, a not unattractive widow in her early forties, is supervising the breakfast.

NARRATOR

And over at the cafe, the owner, Miss Dulcie Mae...well she is kind of prejudiced cause everyone knows she's been stuck on Ed Earl for years, ever since her husband passed away. She has a fine son, Billy, and....

Dulcie Mae is pouring coffee and she looks off at someone shouting in the town square. The customers look off, too.

NARRATOR

Hmmm...What's that commotion out there?

37 EXT. GILBERT COURTHOUSE - DAY

37

THREE NESTERS playing dominoes in the gazebo turn their heads and look off as a hysterical MODENE ENNIS, sporting a tight new permanent hairdo, runs across the street and up the steps of the courthouse.

MODENE

Dammit! Dammit!

CONTINUED

37

CONTINUED

37

NARRATOR

Oh, it's that town troublemaker,  
Modene Ennis, heading up to  
Ed Earl's office to give him a hard  
time again.

38

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

38

Modene dashes down the corridor, screaming.

MODENE

Ed Earl! Ed Earl!

She walks through the swinging door, past a startled  
RITA CROWELL, Ed Earl's gray-haired secretary.

MODENE

Morning, Rita.

DEPUTY FRED WILKINS is coming out of Ed Earl's office. He  
is swept back inside by the force of Modene's entrance.

MODENE

Morning, Deputy Fred.

She plants herself in front of the sheriff's desk, where  
ED EARL, leaning back in his chair, is whittling chains from  
a block of wood. Behind his desk hang portraits of all nine  
County Sheriffs ending with Jack Roy Wallace and Ed Earl  
Dodd.

MODENE

Ed Earl, now listen up. You've got  
yourself a problem.

Ed Earl looks up and tips his hat back on his head.

ED EARL

Morning, Miss Modene.

MODENE

It just ain't right for Tucker  
Faylin to keep on doing this. I've  
talked to him. I've talked to  
you. There is a law in this  
county, Sheriff, and it's up to you  
to see that it's carried out.

Ed Earl stands up and grabs his gun and holster.

CONTINUED

38 CONTINUED

38

ED EARL

I'll take care of it.

DEPUTY FRED

Do you want me to bring the rifle?

ED EARL

Put it down, Fred. I've handled this situation before.

39 EXT. BEAUTY SHOP - DAY

39

A mule is standing in front of Miss Modene's car, with his behind sitting on the highly-polished hood. A few townspeople have gathered around to look at the bizarre sight.

Ed Earl, with his guns strapped on, looking like he's going out to meet Billy the Kid, walks across the street from the Courthouse. Behind him are Rita and Deputy Fred; while Miss Modene, keeping up beside him, continues to babble.

MODENE

I came out of the beauty shop and there he was, standing right in front of my car. I tried to back up, but I couldn't, so I went forward slowly, figuring that he'd move, but he just buckled up his back legs and sat right down on my hood.

The group stops as Modene points at her predicament. Ed Earl is not fazed at all. He walks up to the mule and addresses him, man to man.

ED EARL

Mornin', mule. I'm Sheriff Ed Earl Dodd and I've got a request here for you to, pardon the expression, move your ass.

40 INT. BARBER SHOP - DAY

40

MANSEL, the barber, is giving C.J. VERNON, the insurance salesman, his morning shave. C.J. looks out the window.

C.J.

What's going on out there?

CONTINUED

40

CONTINUED

40

MANSEL

Ed Earl's talking to that jackass again.

C.J.

You mean the mule or Miss Modene?

They both laugh and settle back.

41

EXT. BEAUTY SHOP - DAY

41

Ed Earl continues addressing the mule.

ED EARL

I'm sorry you're taking it this way. I don't want to lose my temper because, as folks will tell you, that can be real trouble.

MODENE

Sheriff, you got to get him off there. Where's Tucker Faylin?

DEPUTY FRED

Why don't you give him a tug?

ED EARL

Shut up, Fred. Now, listen, mule. I don't want to get physical with you. I want to be real polite. So, I'm asking you for the last time...Move!

The mule stares back at him and is singularly unimpressed. Ed Earl gives up.

ED EARL

Okay. If that's your decision.

He takes a cheroot from his breast pocket and puts it in his mouth. He strikes a match on his belt buckle and lights the cigar. Modene is very agitated at Ed Earl's calm and his lack of progress.

MODENE

What are you going to do, Sheriff?  
I'm expected back home.

Ed Earl walks out of frame. A quick cut of the mule's tail being lifted off the hood. The mule looks over his shoulder to see what's happening.

CONTINUED

41

CONTINUED

4

MODENE

Sheriff, are you listening to me?

LOUISE MAPLES, an elderly lady of the town and a staunch supporter of Ed Earl, butts in.

LOUISE

Hush, Modene. The Sheriff knows what he's doing.

MODENE

Don't hush me, Louise. I've spent fifteen dollars on this permanent and I'm so upset it's beginning to lose it's shape.

The sudden loud whinny of the mule startles them both. Deputy Fred and Rita back up in fright.

42

INT. BARBER SHOP - DAY

42

Mansel and C.J. look out the window.

43

INT. GAZEBO - DAY

43

The three nesters look up from their game.

44

EXT. GILBERT TOWN SQUARE - DAY

44

A long shot of the mule as it gallops wildly across the town square.

45

INT. DULCIE MAE'S CAFE - DAY

45

Dulcie Mae glances up from the counter as Ed Earl enters and sits down.

DULCIE MAE

Morning, Ed Earl.

ED EARL

Morning, Dulcie.

She begins to pour him a cup of coffee.

DULCIE MAE

I heard all that noise out there. How did you get that animal to move?

ED EARL

Well, Dulcie Mae, the way to handle an animal is like my daddy used to tell me. He used to say....

CONTINUED

45

CONTINUED

45

There's a crash from the kitchen and the COOK comes running in.

COOK

You won't believe what I saw.

DULCIE MAE

What's that?

COOK

I just saw a mule run by my window blowing cigar smoke out of his ass.

Dulcie Mae looks at Ed Earl. He picks up his coffee.

ED EARL

That's what my daddy told me.

Dulcie Mae laughs.

46

EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - NIGHT

46

The sun goes down over a long shot of the Chicken Ranch.

NARRATOR

Just about the time Ed Earl took over his job as Sheriff, Miss Wulla Jean passed away.

47

INT. CHICKEN RANCH PARLOR - NIGHT

47

Jewel, now more mature, is greeting customers at the front door and taking their money. Miss Wulla Jean's black crepe draped portrait hangs on the wall and couples are still dancing to the old jukebox in the front parlor.

NARRATOR

She bequeathed her place in her will to her favorite working girl, Mona Stangle, who, you might say, had worked her way up from the bottom....

48

INT. CHICKEN RANCH - UPSTAIRS - NIGHT

48

The door opens and, from a low angle, we see a glamorous pair of legs walk along the corridor.

NARRATOR

No one knew much about her, where she came from or why, but they did know she ran the same tight ship and carried on the same tradition of quality.



49

INT. CHICKEN RANCH - DOWNSTAIRS - NIGHT

49

We follow the woman until she turns at the top landing. Customers at the front door turn their heads and look up. MONA STANGLEY, glamorously gowned, smiles a welcome and begins walking down the stairs.

MONA

(singing)

It's just a little old  
Bitty pissant country place  
Ain't nothin' much to see  
No drinking allowed  
We get a nice quiet crowd  
Plain as it can be.

It's just a piddly squattin' ole  
Time country place  
Ain't nothin' too high-toned  
Jes' lots of good will  
And maybe one small thrill  
But there's nothing dirty goin' on!

GIRLS AND BOYS

Nothin' dirty goin' on.

Miss Mona walks into the parlor.

MONA

We get simple farmers  
Local businessmen  
Congress folks from Austin  
Young boys lookin' for sin  
Now we used to get a lot of roughnecks  
When the oil boom was high  
But payday'd get a little rowdy  
Thank God the field run dry.

MONA AND THE GIRLS

It's just a little bitty pissant  
Country place  
Nothin' much to see  
No drinkin' allowed  
We get a nice quiet crowd  
Plain as it can be.

It's just a piddly squattin'  
Old time country place  
Nothin' too high-toned  
Jes' lots of good will  
And maybe one small thrill  
But there's nothin' dirty goin' on!

CONTINUED

49

CONTINUED

49

MONA

I don't hire no married girls  
 They're not on the ball  
 'Cause they got homes and husbands  
 They're not stable at all  
 'Cause they don't understand a thing  
 About a proper business day  
 Now what's the point of  
 Openin' up the store  
 If you give the goods away?

It's just a little bitty pissant  
 Country place  
 Nothin' much to see  
 No drinkin' allowed  
 We get a nice quiet crowd  
 Plain as it can be.

A girl in the back nudges a guy to keep his hip flask hidden  
 in his jacket.

MONA AND JEWEL

It's just a piddly squattin'  
 Old time country place  
 Nothin' too high-toned  
 Jes' lots of good will  
 And maybe one small thrill  
 But there's nothin' dirty goin' on!

50

INT. CHICKEN RANCH DINING ROOM - DAY

50

All the girls, in their nighties and bathrobes, are down for  
 breakfast, seated at the big table. The Cook has a helper,  
 but Jewel is in charge of serving.

MONA

Keep your language clean, girls  
 Keep your bedrooms neat  
 Don't hang around the town cafe  
 Or say 'hi' on the street.

Mind your P's and Q's  
 And manners  
 And you don't need no other tools  
 'Cause every girl who lives here knows  
 My special no-no rules.

CONTINUED

JEWEL

Yeah, every girl who lives here knows  
Miss Mona's no-no rules.

MONA

Ruby Rae, start 'em.

RUBY RAE

Beds are not to be wallowed in  
That's the kind of thing  
That big fat lazy hogs do.

MONA

And it don't make money. Beatrice....

BEATRICE

And I won't tolerate no tyin'  
Up my telephone with other  
People's business.

MONA

Eloise, honey....

ELOISE

And please don't show us  
No tattoos, no hearts and flowers  
On your thigh.

MONA

It's downright tacky.

GINGER, DURLA AND ANGEL

Brands belong on cattle  
And that ain't what we're  
Sellin' at Miss Mona's.

MONA

Do you catch my drift?  
I pay the food and the rent  
And the utilities  
You keep your mind on your work  
Responsibilities  
Don't let your mouth overload your  
Capabilities  
And we can get along...Dawn....

DAWN

Any bad habits you come in with  
Get rid of right now.

CONTINUED

50

CONTINUED - 2

MONA

Taddy Jo....

TADDY JO

I can't stand no chewin' gum  
It looks just like a cow.

MONA

Linda Lou....

LINDA LOU

Anyone takin' sick leave  
Oughta be real sure they're sick.

MONA

And every time you hear that bell....

Jewel rings the bell prominently displayed in the hall at  
the bottom of the stairs.

MONA AND GIRLS

Better get here double quick!

51

EXT. CHICKEN RANCH GARDEN - DAY

51

It's the afternoon free time and while the girls lounge  
around outside in their day wear, Miss Mona continues  
singing.

MONA

And as for pimps, pimps are somethin'  
You don't need to get your daily  
Business done  
Are you listenin' good?  
So keep those leeches and bloodsuckers  
Off the back road  
I know how to use a gun  
No one messes with my girls.

One girl practices the flute, another ballet, another yoga,  
while another girl is sitting on the wooden swing reading a  
book "How To Make Money In Real Estate".

MONA

And any questions you might have  
About the way I run this place  
Don't gripe and whine  
Behind my back  
Just tell me face-to-face  
I'm open-minded  
Say it all.  
Then go upstairs and pack  
The door's thata way.

52 INT. CHICKEN RANCH - UPSTAIRS - NIGHT 52

The girls start coming out of their rooms and begin dancing downstairs.

GIRLS

She pays the food and the rent and the  
Utilities  
We keep our mind on our work  
Responsibilities  
Don't let your mouth overload your  
Capabilities.

53 INT. CHICKEN RANCH - TV PARLOR - NIGHT 53

Mona pushes the sliding doors aside and steps out to greet a group of conventioners.

MONA

And we can get along.  
(talking)  
Howdy, boys. Welcome to the  
Chicken Ranch.

MEN

Hello...  
Howdy, Miss Mona...  
Nice to see you....

MONA

Come on over here, I'd like  
you to meet my girls.

54 INT. CHICKEN RANCH - DOWNSTAIRS - NIGHT 54

The music changes as the girls vamp down the stairs in a slow line, draped across the banister.

GIRLS

It's just a little bitty pissant  
Country place  
Nothin' much to see  
No drinkin' allowed  
We get a nice quiet crowd  
Plain as it can be.

CONTINUED

54

CONTINUED

54

## GIRLS (Cont'd)

It's just a piddly squattin' old time  
 Country place  
 Nothin' too high-toned  
 Jes' lots of good will  
 And maybe one small thrill  
 But there's nothin' dirty goin' on.

Suddenly the place is full of customers who pair off with  
 the girls and begin dancing.

## MONA, GIRLS, AND BOYS

It's just a little bitty pissant  
 Country place  
 Nothin' much to see  
 No drinkin' allowed  
 We get a nice quiet crowd  
 Plain as it can be.

It's just a piddly squattin' old time  
 Country place  
 Nothin' too high-toned.

The girls begin taking their customers up the stairs as the  
 tempo doubles.

## MONA AND GIRLS

Jes' lots of good will  
 And maybe one small thrill.

## JEWEL AND BOYS

Jes' lots of good will  
 And maybe one small thrill.

## MONA, GIRLS AND BOYS

Jes' lots of good will  
 And maybe one small thrill.

## MONA

But there's nothin' dirty goin' on.

55

INT. CHICKEN RANCH - UPSTAIRS - NIGHT

55

The girls come running up the stairs and take their guests  
 inside their rooms.

## GIRLS AND BOYS

Nothin' dirty goin' on!

All doors slam.

56 EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - SUNRISE

56

A rooster standing on a fence post crows to greet the rising sun. Last night's guests come straggling out, feeling spent but happy. The girls yawn and stretch and wave good-bye from the porch or the upstairs windows. Everybody looks very contented.

NARRATOR

And so the Chicken Ranch continued to live in peace with the town and the folks there took secret pride in the oldest established, permanently operating, non-floating whorehouse in Texas...that is, until about a year ago last Thanksgiving.

57 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

57

In a cloud of dust, Ed Earl speeds his sheriff's car down a country road.

58 INT. SHERIFF'S CAR - DAY

58

Ed Earl looks very agitated as if he were chasing a criminal. He glances at his watch and steps on the gas.

59 INT. SHERIFF'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

59

Rita, seated at her desk, has finished writing out a receipt.

RITA

I can't tell you how thrilled we are with this contribution, Miss Mona. Here's your receipt.

She hands the receipt to Mona, who is standing at the counter in front of her.

MONA

Thank you, Rita.

RITA

Those kids will be so excited. And the Mayor, too. Why, the town council will probably vote you another plaque.

CONTINUED

MONA

I hope not, Rita. I've got a closet full of them now.

Dulcie Mae steps in from the corridor and stops when she sees Mona.

RITA

Hello, Dulcie Mae. You know Miss Mona.

DULCIE MAE

Yes, of course. We've met. Mornin'.

MONA

How are you?

RITA

Isn't this wonderful. Miss Mona has capped the goal for the Little League Fund Campaign.

DULCIE MAE

How nice. On behalf of my son and his teammates, I'd like to thank you.

MONA

Tell them I'll be well repaid when they take the championship this year. Good-bye, Rita.

Mona starts for the door.

RITA

I'm sorry the Sheriff wasn't here to thank you. He drove over to Meritsville. He'll be gone all afternoon.

MONA

Well, tell him I said hi.  
(to Dulcie)

'Bye.

DULCIE MAE

'Bye.

RITA

'Bye.

Mona leaves.



60 EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD - DAY 60  
Ed Earl continues racing across the countryside.

61 EXT. GILBERT TOWN SQUARE - DAY 61  
Mona is getting into her car as Deputy Fred drives up.

DEPUTY FRED  
Hello, Miss Mona. Nice to see you.

MONA  
Hello, Deputy Fred. You keeping an eye on my place at night?

DEPUTY FRED  
Sure are. The Sheriff's real particular about the security out there.

MONA  
Well, some night when you're not on duty you drop on by. I'm sure the girls would like to show their appreciation.

DEPUTY FRED  
Oh, Miss Mona, shucks. You know I'm a married man.

MONA  
Now, Fred, you think the cows don't appreciate the time off when the bull goes on over to the next pasture?

DEPUTY FRED  
(blushing)  
Oh, Miss Mona.

Mona laughs and drives out of town.

62 EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD - DAY 62  
A closeup of Ed Earl as he continues driving.

63 EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD - DAY 63  
His Sheriff's car speeds past camera.

64 EXT. ED EARL'S HOUSE - DAY 64

Ed Earl turns his car off the highway and drives up to the front porch of a house. He gets out.

65 INT. ED EARL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY 65

Ed Earl strides across the living room to the bedroom, sees a jacket flung over a chair, fingers it for a moment, smiles to himself, then flings open the bedroom door.

66 INT. ED EARL'S BEDROOM - DAY 66

Ed Earl stops in the doorway and his face falls at what he sees.

ED EARL

Dammit!

We cut and see a figure lying in bed in the darkened room. The lights turn on. Mona is lying in his bed with a sheet pulled up coyly to her chin. She smiles at him.

MONA

What's the matter?

ED EARL

You've gotten into bed already.

MONA

So?

ED EARL

I've told you a hundred times, watching you undress is the best part.

MONA

The best part?

ED EARL

Well, maybe not the best part, but certainly in the top two.

MONA

Well then, Ed Earl....

She throws off the sheet and we see that she's lying in bed fully clothed. Ed Earl laughs.

CONTINUED

ED EARL

I'm glad I was late.

MONA

Me too.

He starts toward the bed, but she bounces out and picks up a package from her tote bag.

MONA

Now, just hold it for a second. I've got a surprise for you. I picked up a package this morning from the post office. It's the latest thing from Frederick's of Hollywood.

She holds up a black shorty negligee. He isn't very impressed.

ED EARL

Not much to it.

MONA

I think I can fill it out.

She goes into the bathroom. He laughs and shouts after her.

ED EARL

I'll bet you can.

He quickly undoes his tie and takes off his shirt.

ED EARL

I swear to God, Mona, there ain't a woman in the world that can get me as excited as you can.

MONA (v.o.)

Even after all these years we been meeting like this?

ED EARL

Every year with you, darlin', is like a minute of sheer happiness.

MONA (v.o.)

That's very sweet, Ed Earl.

ED EARL

Well, you bring out the romantic in me.

CONTINUED

He undoes his belt and drops his pants. He looks up as Mona appears in the doorway. She looks stunning in her black negligee.

ED EARL

Woweeee! That was quick.

MONA

I've had a lot of practice getting in and out of my clothes. What do you think?

She models it for him.

ED EARL

Hot damn, Mona, it makes me feel real sexy.

MONA

You don't look very sexy.

ED EARL

(taken aback)

What do you mean? I look like I always look.

MONA

That's the problem. It's those damn boxer shorts. I can't stand the look of those droopy white drawers.

ED EARL

These? What's the matter with them? I always wear boxer shorts. I've worn them for years.

MONA

They look it.

ED EARL

This is a brand new pair. And what do you mean I don't look sexy? People have always said I look sexy. They say I have a sexy quality.

MONA

You do, but those boxer shorts don't. Now, look here. This is what I ordered expressly for you.

CONTINUED

She takes a pair of black jockey shorts from her tote bag. He shuffles over to her with his pants still around his boots and takes a look at them.

ED EARL

Looks like a Japanese sling shot.

MONA

It's a pair of jockey shorts with little silver snaps on the side.

ED EARL

I'm not getting into those. They'd kill me.

MONA

They cost me twenty dollars, plus postage, Ed Earl, and I want you to wear them.

ED EARL

Twenty dollars for that little thing? You got screwed.

MONA

Come on, Ed Earl.

ED EARL

I'm not putting them on.

MONA

If they look half as good as I think they will, you won't have to keep them on for long.

ED EARL

Mona, I'm not going to wear that thing. They're ridiculous. They're embarrassing.

MONA

They're sexy.

ED EARL

I said 'no' and that's the end of it.

MONA

Okay, then I'm getting dressed.

ED EARL

Okay, I'll put them on.

CONTINUED

66

CONTINUED - 4

66

He grabs them and, still shuffling, makes his way into the bathroom.

ED EARL

(muttering)

Damn. They'll be like putting two bowling balls in a marble sack.

Mona laughs and takes the phone off the hook. She goes to a closet and brings out a pillow.

MONA

I saw Dulcie Mae in town today.

Ed Earl talks from the bathroom.

ED EARL (v.o.)

Oh, yeah?

MONA

I expect you're going out to her place for Thanksgiving dinner?

ED EARL (v.o.)

Don't I always?

MONA

Well, you better start checking that turkey, 'cause there's a hook inside that's gonna land you right over at the wedding chapel.

ED EARL (v.o.)

Not me, Mona. I don't believe in that stuff. It don't work out.

MONA

Amen to that.

Ed Earl sticks his head out around the door.

ED EARL

Ready?

MONA

I'm always ready.

CONTINUED

66

CONTINUED - 5

6

Like a flash, Ed Earl runs out of the bathroom across the room, jumps into bed and pulls the sheet up to his chin. Mona laughs.

MONA

Oh, Ed Earl. Is that it?

ED EARL

Yeah. How was it?

MONA

But I hardly saw them.

ED EARL

That's too bad, because I ain't going to parade around this room like some damn model.

MONA

Come on, Ed Earl. Do it for me.

ED EARL

No.

MONA

I just want to take a look at them.

ED EARL

No.

Mona lifts up the bottom of the sheet.

MONA

Come on, just a little peek.

ED EARL

No.

She puts her hand under the sheet. Ed Earl jumps up.

ED EARL

Mona!

Mona withdraws her hand and holds up the shorts in triumph.

CONTINUED

66

CONTINUED - 6

66

MONA

That's what the little silver snaps  
are for.

ED EARL

(laughing)

Come on over here and let me put a  
lip-lock on you. Ooops! Wait!  
I've gotta brush my teeth.

He grabs the bedspread, wraps it around himself and hobbles  
into the bathroom. Mona laughs.

MONA

Oh, Ed Earl, I like a lot of  
things, but these afternoons with  
you have got to top the list.

ED EARL

Sing it to me, honey.

MONA

(singing)

I like fancy frilly things  
High-heeled shoes and diamond rings  
Ragtime bands and western swing  
And sneakin' around with you.

ED EARL

(singing)

I like beer and rodeos  
Detective books and dominoes  
Football games and Cheerios  
And sneakin' around with you.

TOGETHER

Sneakin' around with you  
Goin' a round or two  
Doin' what lovers do  
Whenever we're sneaking around.

MONA

I like lots of cash on hand  
And dirty jokes about the Fuller Brush Man.

ED EARL

I like stuff I understand  
Like sneakin' around with you.

CONTINUED



MONA

I like a thrill that has no strings.

ED EARL

Friendship that don't ever change.

MONA

And laughter from the joy of things.

TOGETHER

And sneakin' around with you  
We're just sneakin' around  
We're not chained and bound  
Sharin' the ups and downs  
Of lovers sneakin' around.

MONA

Oh, I like drive-in picture shows  
Kissin' long and lovin' slow.

ED EARL

The secret places lovers go  
Whenever they're sneakin' around  
I like the crazy things we try.

MONA

And the sexy things we fantasize.

ED EARL

And makin' out in broad daylight.

TOGETHER

Sneakin' around with you  
Sneakin' around with you  
Keepin' it all brand new  
Gettin' the best of you  
Whenever we're sneakin' around.

ED EARL

Sneakin' around that's all.

MONA

I'm gonna lay down the law.

TOGETHER

Watchin' the rise and fall  
Of lovers sneakin' around.

CONTINUED

66 CONTINUED - 8

66

ED EARL  
We're just sneakin' around.

TOGETHER  
We're just sneakin'....

The song ends with them sitting on the edge of the bed just about to kiss. But this kiss is interrupted by a sudden loud knocking.

67 EXT. ED EARL'S HOUSE - DAY

67

Deputy Fred is knocking at the front door.

DEPUTY FRED  
Sheriff. Sheriff.

68 INT. ED EARL'S BEDROOM - DAY

68

Ed Earl and Mona haven't moved. They listen.

ED EARL  
It's Deputy Fred. What the hell does he want?

MONA  
I don't know. I think you better go find out.

ED EARL  
Okay. Hold that position. I'll be right back.

He leaves her sitting on the bed.

69 EXT. ED EARL'S HOUSE - DAY

69

Deputy Fred is continuing to knock on the door.

DEPUTY FRED  
Sheriff! It's me, Deputy Fred.

The door opens and Ed Earl stands in the doorway, wearing nothing but the bedspread.

ED EARL  
This better be important.

CONTINUED

69

CONTINUED

69

DEPUTY FRED

Well, I think it is. I saw your car from the highway and I figured your phone must be out because what are you wearing that for?

ED EARL

I'm taking a shower.

DEPUTY FRED

Oh. I always take mine in the morning. I read in the Reader's Digest about....

ED EARL

I don't care. What the hell do you want?

DEPUTY FRED

It's the Mayor. He's real anxious to speak to you. Rita's been calling all over the county for you. He wants a meeting right away.

ED EARL

Can't it wait?

DEPUTY FRED

You mean until after you take a shower?

ED EARL

Go radio them that I'll be back when I get there. Nothing's that important it can't wait until this afternoon.

70

INT. ED EARL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

70

Ed Earl shuts the door and walks back into the bedroom.

71

INT. ED EARL'S BEDROOM - DAY

71

Ed Earl enters, looks around and sees Mona's negligee folded neatly by the side of the bed. He picks it up for a minute, then hears a car start off outside. He throws down the negligee and starts for the front door.

72

INT. ED EARL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

72

Ed Earl crosses the living room and opens the front door.

73

EXT. ED EARL'S FRONT PORCH - DAY

73

Ed Earl steps out on the porch and looks. In the driveway, Deputy Fred is talking to Mona. She drives off and he waves good-bye. Chuckling to himself, Deputy Fred walks over to the porch.

DEPUTY FRED

Ain't that funny. All this time, Miss Mona was at the back, knocking on the screen door. She said she's in a hurry but just dropped by to give you this.

He hands Ed Earl the pair of black jockey shorts with the little silver snaps. Ed Earl takes it and holds it up, shaking his head. Deputy Fred explains.

DEPUTY FRED

It's a Japanese slingshot.

Ed Earl shoots him a look, then turns and goes back inside.

74

INT. SHERIFF'S INNER OFFICE - DAY

74

The Mayor and C.J. have been anxiously waiting for the Sheriff. Ed Earl enters, followed by Deputy Fred, and makes his way over to his desk.

ED EARL

Okay, Rufus, what's on your mind?

MAYOR

Something that could have serious implications to the health of this town. Tell 'im, C.J., just like you told me.

C.J.

Well, Sheriff, I have a friend who works at a TV station in Houston and he's tipped me off that Melvin P. Thorpe is planning to do an expose on the Chicken Ranch.

ED EARL

Who?

MAYOR

Melvin P. Thorpe. He's that crazy consumer advocate. Has that report on the late night news.

DEPUTY FRED

He's got a new show now. Half hour. Once a week. The Watchdog Report. It's on tonight.

CONTINUED

ED EARL

Well, I don't think he can say anything about the Chicken Ranch on TV. It's supposed to be a family medium.

MAYOR

But he's a sensationalist, Ed Earl. He shows up with his TV camera anytime a consumer has a complaint. He's a menace to the business community.

DEPUTY FRED

He's the fella who put the peanuts back in the chocolate bar.

ED EARL

What?

DEPUTY FRED

He made the makers of the Peanut Delight candy bar admit they put less peanuts in each bar than they advertise and got them to change their ways.

ED EARL

Sounds like a pretty tough customer.

DEPUTY FRED

He has a lot of influence out there.

MAYOR

And if he starts bringing his cameras out to the Chicken Ranch....

ED EARL

Calm down, Rufus. Let me make a few phone calls. I've got a little influence out there myself.

INT. TV STATION - MANAGER'S OFFICE - DAY

The MANAGER of KPTZ, Channel 4, is talking to Ed Earl on the phone.

TV STATION MANAGER

It's no use talking to me, Sheriff. Melvin P. Thorpe is now the biggest attraction at this station. High ratings, lots of letters. He doesn't listen to anybody. Hell, he wants to go national. He wants to be watchdog for the whole U.S. of A.

76 INT. SHERIFF CHAPMAN'S OFFICE - HOUSTON - DAY

76

SHERIFF CHAPMAN of Houston, a friend of Ed Earl's, is talking to him on the phone.

SHERIFF CHAPMAN

I'd like to help you, Ed Earl, but just like you don't want to mess with the Chicken Ranch, I don't want to ruffle the feathers of this bird. He's getting to be a regular Texas attraction.

77 INT. SENATOR'S OFFICE - AUSTIN - DAY

77

SENATOR CHARLES WINGWOOD, an undistinguished blowhard legislator, is on the phone with Ed Earl.

SENATOR

Now wait a minute, Ed Earl. I'd tread easy on this one. Those TV boys can be mighty powerful -- and mighty useful, if you get my meaning.

The SENATOR'S AIDE interrupts.

AIDE

Senator, a quorum call.

SENATOR

Sorry, I've got to go. Damn food stamps again. But let me give you a word of advice from one elected official to another -- be careful of the box.

78 INT. SHERIFF'S INNER OFFICE - DAY

78

Ed Earl hangs up in disgust.

ED EARL

What the hell's going on? This Melvin P. Thorpe character has everybody bamboozled. Deputy Fred, you hold down the fort.

MAYOR

Where you goin'?

ED EARL

I'm driving up to Houston to take care of that little peckerwood myself.

Ed Earl grabs his hat and stalks out.

79 EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - DAY 79

Mona drives up to the Chicken Ranch and parks her car around back.

80 INT. CHICKEN RANCH - DAY 80

Mona comes in the back door and walks through the kitchen. Jewel stops her at the bottom of the stairs.

JEWEL

Hi, Miss Mona.

MONA

Hello, Jewel. How'd everything go this afternoon?

JEWEL

It's been quiet. A couple Army boys from Fort Hood. And right now the Coca-Cola man is making a delivery upstairs. Oh, and there's a girl wants to see you in the parlor.

MONA

We ain't hiring.

JEWEL

That's what I told her, but she is persistent. I think you should see her.

MONA

Okay.

81 INT. CHICKEN RANCH PARLOR - DAY 81

Mona walks into the parlor. A young straggly haired country girl with a cardboard suitcase stands up as she enters and gives Mona a very pretty, somewhat nervous smile. We get to know her later as SHY.

SHY

Hello. Miss Mona?

MONA

That's right.

SHY

My name's Anna Merle Seltzer.

CONTINUED

MONA

Well, sit down, Anna Merle.

They sit.

SHY

I want a job here.

MONA

I'm kinda choosy about who lives  
in my house. Who told you about it?

SHY

Well, I met a girl in Galveston....

MONA

Ever have a run-in with the law?

SHY

No, ma'am. And I don't want to.  
That's why I'd like to work in a  
respectable place.

MONA

How much experience have you had?

SHY

You mean professional?

MONA

For money, honey.

SHY

About a year.

MONA

On the streets?

SHY

No, ma'am.

MONA

For a pimp?

SHY

No, ma'am.

MONA

Motel, hotel, telephone, van?

CONTINUED



SHY

I, uh...I....

Shy trails off. She is obviously lying. Mona drops the businesswoman manner and speaks softly.

MONA

What are you doin' here, honey?

Shy is near tears. She shakes her head.

MONA

I think maybe you better just head on back home.

SHY

I'm broke.

MONA

Well, I could lend you fifty dollars. Course you'd have to pay me back someday.

SHY

It ain't that, ma'am. I got nowheres to go home to.

MONA

Boyfriend treat you bad?

SHY

No, ma'am.

MONA

Folks run you off?

SHY

No, but I ain't never goin' back there.

She glares straight at Mona and we see a toughness for the first time.

MONA

Did your daddy get sweet on you, honey?

Shy lowers her eyes. She can't answer, but we know it's true.

CONTINUED

MONA

Well, that ain't the first time it's happened to a girl, it ain't gonna be the last. Maybe I can get you a job downtown at the five and dime.

SHY

No. I don't want no sales job! I done thought about this. I'm gonna stay right here...I mean, if you'll let me.

MONA

Ordinarily I put girls like you on the next Greyhound, but a smile don't cost nothin' and you came in with one. Ain't nothin' worse for business than girls sittin' around the parlor with long faces.

SHY

Can I stay, then?

MONA

Well, I'm gonna try you out for a while.

(shouting out)

Jewel...come on in here.

(to Shy)

We've got to get you some new clothes and do something about that hair. I'll have one of the girls take you to a beauty shop tomorrow. There are three in town and I like to rotate my business among them. They appreciate that and treat us real nice....

Shy suddenly embraces Mona and sobs uncontrollably. Mona is at first surprised, then holds her and tries to comfort her.

MONA

Come on, now, honey. You're gonna mess up my outfit.

But Shy is like a puppy that's been saved from the pound. She keeps crying and Mona finds herself being very moved.

MONA

Oh, Lord, girl. You got me on the edge of crying. And I've done retired from it. Come on, now. Get a hold on. You'll be fine.

CONTINUED

Jewel enters and stands in the doorway. Shy stops crying and Mona wipes away Shy's tears.

SHY

I'm sorry, Miss Mona.

MONA

That's all right, honey. I know how you feel.

(singing)

Bein' born was the worst and the first  
Mistake I ever made  
The doctor didn't spank me  
He just slapped me in the face  
And the cup of love was always quenchin'  
Someone else's thirst  
Leaving me to swallow  
The bitter taste of hurt.

'Cause I was raised an orphan  
Never wanted as a kid  
Until the year I turned thirteen  
Then everybody did  
Strangers passed me back and forth  
Men just took me as they pleased  
And others had a Cinderella slave  
To cook and clean and weave.

Though the deck is stacked against you  
Win or lose you have to play  
The hand that life has dealt you  
And it's a gamble either way.

On a dusty road at fifteen  
In a yellow cotton dress  
With the desert sun like an angry dragon  
Breathin' down my neck  
And the dry cracked plains that made me think  
Of a prehistoric time  
Should I fear what lay before me  
Less than what I'd left behind.

A fifteen year old girl don't have  
No trouble hitchin' rides  
But sometimes when you're ridin' free  
You'll pay the highest price  
On back roads, and in backseats  
And in cheap highway motels  
But what's a few more strangers  
In a life of nothin' else.

CONTINUED

MONA (Cont'd)

(singing)

Though the deck is stacked against you  
Win or lose you have to play  
The hand that life has dealt you  
And it's a gamble either way.

Sixteen found me cryin'  
Underneath a scarlet light  
On the doorstep of a stranger  
On a cold and rainy night  
When I walked into the parlor here  
The pieces seemed to fit  
I was good at pleasin' strangers  
So I made the most of it.

Either way it's all a gamble  
So view the stakes and know the odds  
Lay your cards upon the table  
Do your dealin' from the top.

Though the deck is stacked against you  
Win or lose you have to play  
The hand that life has dealt you  
And it's a gamble either way  
(spoken)

Yeah, it's a gamble either way.

Jewel, who has been listening through the song, glances over at Mona. A look of recognition passes between them. Shy looks up at Jewel.

SHY

Miss Mona's gonna let me stay.

JEWEL

That's wonderful, child, but after talking to you this afternoon it don't surprise me none.

Mona smiles at Jewel and walks out to the hallway to beckon to the girls passing by.

MONA

Girls, come on in here.

Ginger and Ruby Rae enter. Mona introduces them to Shy.

MONA

Girls, this is Anna Merle Seltzer. Goodness, that's a mouthful. We've got to do something about that. Even at our reduced rates, that name's a tough sell.

CONTINUED

81

CONTINUED - 6

81

SHY

Well, I was thinking of changing it to Dawn.

MONA

Hmmm. I already got me a Dawn. I'm just gonna call you Shy 'til I can think of something better. This is Ginger and Ruby Rae.

GINGER

Howdy.

RUBY RAE

Hello, honey.

MONA

Take Shy upstairs and show her around. She'll be boarding with us for a while.

SHY

Thanks, Miss Mona.

GINGER

Well, that's good news. We can sure use the help with all them college boys coming over here Thanksgiving night.

SHY

College boys?

MONA

Yeah. The winning seniors from the Texas Aggie/Texas University football game get treated to a night here on Thanksgiving.

JEWEL

By their Alumni Association.

RUBY RAE

It's a tradition. Been going on for years.

MONA

You see, honey, the Chicken Ranch is a Texas institution and I aim to keep it that way.

82

EXT. HOUSTON - DUSK

82

We pan down from a helicopter shot of the Houston skyline and zero into the building that houses Channel 4.

83

INT. TV STATION - NIGHT

83

Ed Earl is following a Page down the aisle of the TV studio backstage. The Page shows him Melvin's dressing room and exits. Ed Earl knocks on the door.

MELVIN (v.o)

Come in.

Ed Earl enters.

84

INT. MELVIN'S DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

84

MELVIN P. THORPE is sitting in his white T-shirt and American flag boxer shorts while he puts the finishing touches to the straightening of his silver-haired wig. Ed Earl is a little surprised.

ED EARL

Mister Thorpe?

Melvin looks up in the mirror, sees him and jumps up with a smile.

MELVIN

I know you.

ED EARL

You do?

MELVIN

Aren't you Sheriff Ed Earl Dodd from over in Lanville County?

ED EARL

That's right, how did you....

MELVIN

Well, this is surely my pleasure...  
(shaking hands  
enthusiastically)

My honor. What brings you up here to Houston? Please, sit down.

(waves to  
the couch)

Anywhere over there. I'm just getting dressed. I've got the show tonight and I'm running a bit behind time.

Ed Earl sits on the couch and Melvin returns to dressing.

CONTINUED

During the following dialogue, Ed Earl watches him put on his corset, jock pad, shoulder pads, red, white and blue suit and tie, pearl-handled revolvers in silver-studded holsters, handcuffs and white cowboy boots.

ED EARL

Well, it's the show I want to talk to you about, Mister Thorpe.

MELVIN

Melvin.

ED EARL

Melvin....

MELVIN

You watch the show, Ed?

ED EARL

Well, I....

MELVIN

Last week was the best rating we ever had. The City Planning Commissioner driving a city car while he was on vacation! We broke a thirty share. And it's affecting my pieces on the late night news. Up! Up! Up! They love my little report.

ED EARL

I've heard you're very popular.

MELVIN

The power of television -- of public exposure -- is so great it scares me. I swear I could get the Mayor's own children to throw rocks at him. Which show did you like best?

ED EARL

(after a beat)

Well, I...I thought the peanuts in the chocolate bar....

MELVIN

One of my favorites! Three score means sixty, like the Bible says. So, if it says sixty nuts on the

CONTINUED

MELVIN (Cont'd)

wrapper, I want to count sixty nuts inside. Right?..And I'm talking whole nuts, not half nuts or nut bits or nut chips. We're talking a full nut!

ED EARL

I can see that.

MELVIN

Thank God we still live in a society where anything that's phony or dishonest can't stand the light of day.

He puts on his shirt over his padded shoulders and gets one pad caught. Ed Earl points it out.

ED EARL

Your pad there....

MELVIN

Oh, thanks...Yes, most corporations involved in false advertising will just laugh at a fifty dollar fine, but if you show up with a TV camera and give 'em bad publicity, they shape up faster than goose shit through a tin horn.

ED EARL

It's that bad publicity that I want to talk to you about. Sometimes it can hurt people. Like this report I hear you're planning on the Chicken Ranch. That place has been operating peacefully for a long time. Hell, I wouldn't be surprised if your granddaddy took your daddy out there to learn about the birds and the bees.

MELVIN

I'm from New Jersey.

ED EARL

Oh.

MELVIN

I moved to Houston six years ago.

CONTINUED



ED EARL

The point I want to make is every schoolboy in the state knows about it, most politicians have slept there, and the town, the Mayor and the folks who elected me want to keep things the way they are.

MELVIN

What is your interest in this whorehouse, Sheriff?

ED EARL

Well, my deputies patrol out there, stop fights before they start. The girls' police records are checked, so are their health cards. And as for getting information that helps us solve crimes, why the Chicken Ranch is a better intelligence-gathering operation than all those FBI flyers they keep mailing me.

MELVIN

You know, Sheriff, it just struck me. We're in the same profession.

ED EARL

What's that?

MELVIN

Law enforcement. I'm out there fighting for the rights of the public just like you. We're both of us protecting the people -- you in the old way; me in the new.

ED EARL

The new?

MELVIN

Television! I'm the electronic bounty hunter. I use a camera; you use a gun.

Ed Earl is not impressed with this comparison. He begins talking tough.

ED EARL

Melvin, all I want to say is you'd be doing everybody a big favor if

CONTINUED

ED EARL (Cont'd)

you'd drop this whole thing. The girls perform a wanted service and right or wrong....

MELVIN

Right or wrong don't interest me. I'm no moralizer. I leave all that to the preacher.

Ed Earl is a bit taken back by this admission and a little confused.

ED EARL

Really? Well, I'm glad to hear that. The Mayor was feeling that you'd stir up a lot of unnecessary publicity.

MELVIN

Unnecessary publicity! He's got me all wrong. I'm not one of those sensation mongers out for their own egos.

He finishes dressing and stands looking at himself in front of the mirror.

MELVIN

What do you think?

ED EARL

(pause)  
It's...different.

MELVIN

I designed it myself. No, you tell your Mayor he's got nothing to fear from me on that score.

ED EARL

Really? Well, he'll be happy to hear that.

MELVIN

I'm a lawman. That's my interest. The law! Right, pardner.

He grabs Ed Earl's hand and shakes it. Ed Earl has still not gotten a clear bead on this eccentric character, but figures he's got what he came for.

CONTINUED

84

CONTINUED - 5

84

ED EARL

Right.

MELVIN

Come on, we've got to get out of here. That's my cue.

85

INT. TV STATION HALLWAY - NIGHT

85

They hurry down the hall to the studio's stage.

MELVIN

Listen, I'd like to do an interview with you.

ED EARL

Well, I don't think I'm the type.

MELVIN

Nonsense. You are exactly what the public wants to see. Trust me. Look, we'll talk about it after the show. I want you to be my guest. This is the sponsor's booth. Just sit in there and make yourself comfortable. Bourbon, beer, anything you want.

ED EARL

Thanks.

MELVIN

Not at all. I admire you, Sheriff. You're my kind of cowboy. See ya.

He leaves and Ed Earl, not too sure of himself and thinking he needs a drink, goes into the booth and sits down. He begins lighting a cheroot.

86

INT. TV STATION STAGE - NIGHT

86

The DOGETTES, Melvin's chorus of four male and four female singers, have already begun their opening introduction.

DOGETTES

(singing)

Watchdog will get you  
If you don't watch out  
Watchdog sees and watchdog knows

CONTINUED

## DOGETTES (Cont'd)

Watchdog keeps us on our toes  
 Watchdog assures you  
 That the law's the law  
 No exceptions to the rule  
 Watchdog ain't no fool.

A flustered stage manager is giving signals to Melvin and the cameras.

## DOGETTES

Watchdog protects you  
 He's out on the prowl  
 Guards and checks the best he can  
 Watchdog is a fighting man  
 Watchdog will throw his  
 Beam of light around  
 If some folks don't tow the line  
 Watchdog's light will shine.

## A DOGETTE

(speaking)

And now, The Watchdog Man himself.  
 The eyes and ears of Texas, Melvin  
 P. Thorpe!

Melvin steps out on the stage and stands before a great map of Texas. The Dogettes cheer and the audience wildly applauds as an "Applause" sign flashes.

## MELVIN

Thank you, fellow Texans, and  
 welcome to the Watchdog Report with  
 yours truly Melvin P. Thorpe  
 keeping an eye on what's going on  
 in this beautiful state of ours.

## DOGETTES

(singing)

Shine, Shine, Shine  
 Shine, Shine, Shine  
 Shine, Shine, Shine.

## MELVIN

This week's spotlight will shine on  
 the shameful situation that has  
 been allowed to exist for close to  
 a hundred years. I'm talking about  
 the Chicken Ranch, my friends. The  
 proprietor of this innocent-looking  
 ranch house is a woman known only

CONTINUED

86

CONTINUED - 2

MELVIN (Cont'd)  
as 'Miss Mona' and the man who  
turns his back on her illegal  
operation is Sheriff Ed Earl Dodd.

Ed Earl, sitting behind the glass, stares in open-mouthed  
horror at the mention of his name.

MELVIN

(continuing)

Did I say 'illegal?' Yes, I did!  
Now, I know this is TV, so I'll try  
to be as delicate as I can, but,  
isn't this the age of tellin' it  
like it is?

DOGETTES

Amen! Amen! Hallelujah!

MELVIN

Well, then let's get this thing out  
in the open! Here goes, and may God  
forgive me!

(pause)

Texas...has a whorehouse in it!

DOGETTES

(singing)

Lord have mercy on our souls!

MELVIN

(singing)

Texas has a whorehouse in it!

DOGETTES

(singing)

Lord have mercy on our souls!

MELVIN

I'll expose the facts  
Although it fills me with disgust.  
Please excuse the filthy, dark details  
And carnal lust.

DOGETTES

Filthy, dark details and carnal lust!

MELVIN

Dancin' goin' on inside it  
Don't you see they've gone plumb wild  
I inquired no one denied it  
Now I think I'm getting riled

CONTINUED

86 CONTINUED - 3

MELVIN (Cont'd)

Bodies close together  
 Arms and legs all rearranged  
 And the Sheriff does not close it down  
 That's very strange!

Melvin points over to the sponsor's booth as the audience,  
 in unison, turns to look at Ed Earl.

AUDIENCE

(singing)

Does not close it down  
 That's very strange!

87 INT. TV STATION SPONSOR'S BOOTH - NIGHT 87

Ed Earl is taken aback at the sudden attention. He looks  
 out at the audience and then up at the monitors where the  
 show is being broadcast across Texas.

88 MONTAGE - NIGHT - TV MONITORS 88

We go to quick cuts of TV sets throughout the studio.

89 INT. HOMES AROUND HOUSTON - NIGHT - MONTAGE 89

Quick cuts of families watching TV. A series of heads  
 turning. A family at the dinner table staring at the TV  
 with their forks halfway to their mouths. A father puts  
 down his newspaper. A grandmother chokes. A grandfather  
 chuckles. A mother claps her hands over her daughter's ears.

MELVIN (v.o.)

Mean-eyed, juiced up, brilliantined  
 honky-tonk cowboys!

DOGETTES (v.o.)

Oh, no!

90 INT. OLD FOLKS' HOME - NIGHT - TV SETS 90

Old folks stop rocking. Hearing aids are turned up. Domino  
 games stop.

MELVIN (v.o.)

Mixin' with green-eyed, thin-lipped  
 hard-as-nails, peroxide blondes!

91 INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT - TV SETS 91

A nurse drops a glass of medicine. A patient bites his spoon. An intern lets go a trolley.

DOGETTES (v.o.)

Oh, no!

92 INT. GAS STATION - NIGHT - TV SET 92

A holdup man and his victim stop in midrobbery to look at the TV set.

MELVIN (v.o.)

Not to mention some types that you'd never guess would venture near....

93 INT. DEPARTMENT STORE MALL - NIGHT 93

Customers stare in surprise at a TV display while a salesman runs a credit card machine over his hand.

MELVIN (v.o.)

Actin' all depraved and loose and wild.

94 INT. SENATOR'S LIMOUSINE - NIGHT - TV SET 94

Senator Charles Wingwood has stopped pouring himself a highball and stares wide-eyed at the broadcast on the TV set in the backseat of his limousine.

MELVIN (v.o.)

Ninety miles from here.

(speaking)

Here they are, our own Melvin P. Thorpe Singers!

95 INT. TV STATION STAGE - NIGHT 95

The men singers touch their fingertips to their hat brims; the girl singers half curtsy and smile broad, vacant smiles.

DOGETTES

(singing)

Texas has a whorehouse in it!

96 INT. DULCIE MAE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT - TV SET 96

We see Dulcie Mae watching the show in her kitchen as she prepares dinner. Her twelve-year-old son, BILLY, is sitting at the table also watching.

MELVIN (v.o.)

(singing)

I'll not let this scandal fade!

97 INT. GILBERT GAZETTE OFFICE - NIGHT - TV SET 97

Edsel, the editor, is seated at his desk and can't believe what he's seeing.

DOGETTES (v.o.)

Texas has a whorehouse in it!

EDSEL

I'll be damned!

98 INT. MAYOR'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - TV SET 98

The Mayor watches from his living room chair. He chokes.

MAYOR

Doreen. Doreen! Run git my heart pills! Hurry!

99 INT. STUDY - NIGHT - TV SET 99

A little guy, in his underwear, watches from a big chair.

MELVIN (v.o.)

I'll uproot and I'll crusade!  
I can smell corruption  
And I'll fight it to the top!  
Loveless copulation goin' oooonnnnn.  
And it must stop!

100 INT. CHICKEN RANCH PARLOR - NIGHT - TV SET 100

The girls are watching it in the parlor. All are startled and happy to be on TV.

GINGER

Oh, my goodness. They're talking about us!



101 INT. TV STATION STAGE - NIGHT 101

DOGETTES

Loveless copulation, stop that copulation!  
Loveless copulation, stop that copulation!

102 INT. A HOUSTON BAR - NIGHT 102

An ex-boxer BARTENDER is staring with his few customers at the show on the small TV.

BARTENDER

Loveless copulation?

He picks up the phone.

103 TELEPHONE MONTAGE 103

All over the state, people are grabbing for their phones... farmers, cowboys, oil riggers, maids, cooks, school teachers.

Switchboards are a mass of activity as people in little vignettes sing to their neighbors.

DOGETTES (v.o.)

Texas has a whorehouse in it  
Lord have mercy on our souls  
Texas has a whorehouse in it  
Lord have mercy on our souls  
Watchdog smells corruption and  
He'll fight it to the top  
Loveless copulation goin' on  
Goin' on, goin' on, goin' on....

We pull back from the little vignettes to see them form a map of Texas which dissolves into the smiling face of Melvin.

104 INT. TV STUDIO STAGE - NIGHT 104

MELVIN

Don't touch that dial neighbors.  
I'll be back with new and revealing  
information on this and other cases.  
Watchdog never sleeps!

CONTINUED

104

CONTINUED

The Dogettes end the song while the audience joins in singing and swaying and the "applause" signs are now flashing "Amen" and "Hallelujah."

DOGETTES AND AUDIENCE

(singing in  
counterpoint)

And it must stop  
Watchdog's gonna get you  
He's gonna shine his light on you  
Watchdog's gonna get you  
Gonna shine his light on you.

On the last beat, we pan over to the glass booth and push in on Ed Earl's empty chair.

105

INT. CHICKEN RANCH - DINING ROOM - DAY

105

Mona is pouring Ed Earl a cup of coffee as he tells her the problems caused by Melvin's TV show last night.

ED EARL

That man is crazier than a peach  
orchard sow. Announcing it  
straight out, right there on  
TV!

MONA

So you've been saying.

ED EARL

It's got everybody talking. Not  
because it's news to anyone over  
the age of three months, but  
because they are hearing it in  
their own damn living rooms.  
Sung...sung to music!

MONA

Did he actually call my name?

ED EARL

Not only that. The son-of-a-bitch  
called mine. Television! You  
know, we ain't caught a Peeping Tom  
in Lanville County in twenty-two  
years because all the Peeping Toms  
are home watching television!

CONTINUED

105

CONTINUED

MONA

Well, Ed Earl, seems like ever since I can remember, folks have been ready to jump on me for one reason or another.

(hugs him)

We can beat it. We'll just sit tight 'til it all blows over. Besides I trust you. You're my protector.

ED EARL

You know that man wears a sock in his underwear?

MONA

A sock?

ED EARL

Yup. All rolled up like a Jimmy Dean sausage.

Mona laughs.

MONA

He's probably planning to run for office and is looking to get the Jesus bunch on his side. He's typical of all those crusading fanatics. They rise up talking hot and heavy, confusing crime with committing a sin, but they die down soon enough and everything goes back to normal.

ED EARL

I suppose you're right.

MONA

Ain't I always? Now I suggest that tonight you and I hop over the county line, find a little beer hall and see if we can't forget all this fuss.

ED EARL

That's the best idea I heard all day.

He stands up and is about to take her in his arms when we hear the sound of a honking horn outside. They stop.

MONA

I wonder who that is?

106

EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - DAY

Deputy Fred pulls up in his car, stops and comes running up the steps. The girls on the swing begin to tease him.

GINGER

Well, howdy Deputy Fred. How's your tallywhacker hanging?

BEATRICE

Oh, quit embarrassing him. Anytime you want to lock me up honey, it's okay by me.

Deputy Fred blushes and goes inside.

107

INT. CHICKEN RANCH PARLOR - DAY

107

Ed Earl comes out of the dining room and meets Deputy Fred in the hall. He glares at him.

DEPUTY FRED

Howdy, Sheriff.

ED EARL

This better be important.

DEPUTY FRED

Well, I think it is. That Melvin P. Thorpe is setting up his television show on the courthouse steps.

ED EARL

What?

DEPUTY FRED

He's getting pictures for his report on the late news tonight. He's got a whole posse of TV cameramen and reporters. You better come look.

ED EARL

Well, I'll be a...Right in the middle of town!

DEPUTY FRED

Un-huh. Right outside your office.

108

EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - DAY

108

Ed Earl comes racing outside, followed by Deputy Fred. Mona follows them both.

CONTINUED

108

CONTINUED

ED EARL

I can't believe that sucker.

DEPUTY FRED

You know, he's even brought his own singers.

Ed Earl gets in his car. Mona rushes over to him.

MONA

Now, Ed Earl. Don't do anything you'll be sorry for. You watch that temper of yours.

ED EARL

Don't worry about that, Mona. Just leave that little shithead to me.

Ed Earl drives off. The girls on the porch cheer him on.

TADDY JO

Go get 'im, Sheriff.

BEATRICE

Come on, Deputy Fred.

Deputy Fred follows. The girls laugh, but Mona watches them with a worried look on her face.

109

EXT. GILBERT TOWN SQUARE - DAY

109

Melvin's Watchdog Chorus is singing a reprise of "Texas Has A Whorehouse In It" in the courthouse gazebo. The crowd, including Dulcie Mae, looks on with amusement.

The three old Nesters are playing dominoes. One looks up across the fountain.

FIRST NESTER

Look at that fella in them trick britches.

SECOND NESTER

It's too late in the year for the circus, ain't it?

THIRD NESTER

It's them TV folks, looks like to me.

They grunt, go back to playing dominoes and never look up again.

110

EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

Melvin has a last minute touch-up on his makeup, slaps away his assistant, signals to the cameraman and begins his report.

MELVIN

Howdy again, good neighbors! This is the ol' Watchdog, Melvin P. Thorpe, shining the spotlight on Gilbert -- the little town with the big shame. We're here at the Lanville County Courthouse to ask the local people how they feel about the infamous bordello running wide open in their American hometown.

He walks up to the gazebo where the Dogettes are assembled and addresses the crowd.

MELVIN

Good people! Good people of Gilbert! May I have your attention! I would like to speak to you about a matter of great importance and concern.

EDSEL

Let's hear it, Melvin. Lay it on us.

MANSEL

Yeah, we can't hardly wait.

MELVIN

I'm talking about nothing less than your community's moral health. I'm talking to you about official blindness, official corruption, official malfeasance.

LOUISE MAPLES

What's that mean?

MODENE ENNIS

I don't know. I'm just waiting for Ed Earl to get here. He's gonna kick that boy's ass.

111

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Ed Earl is driving like a crazy man down the road, causing Deputy Fred behind him to be smothered in a cloud of dust.

112

EXT. GILBERT COURTHOUSE - DAY

The Dogettes are playing "Texas Has A Whorehouse In It" under Melvin's speech.

MELVIN

It's no big secret! You know what's going on in this town. And what's going on is evil, immoral, brazen, and against the law.

(singing)

Oh...Texas Has A Whorehouse In It.

DOGETTES

Lord have mercy on our souls!

MELVIN

Texas has a whorehouse in it!

DOGETTES

Lord have mercy on our souls!

MELVIN

Sin is runnin' rampant  
Like before the fall  
of Rome.

DOGETTES

Ooooh, ooooh,  
Aaah, aaaaah.

MELVIN

Someone is permittin'  
You know what.

Ed Earl careens into the town square and screeches to a halt. He gets out. The Mayor, sensing danger, comes over to calm him.

MAYOR

Now, Sheriff, keep a grip on yourself. Don't start blowing your stack.

ED EARL

Quit whimpering, Rufus.

He walks over to the gazebo. Melvin stops the singing.

MELVIN

And here comes the man himself.  
Would you care to give me an  
interview now, Sheriff?

ED EARL

I'm giving you thirty seconds, you fancified fart, to get you and your singing chorus the hell out of town.

CONTINUED

112

CONTINUED

MAYOR

Now, wait a minute, Ed Earl.

ED EARL

Pack up them damn cameras and get this stuff off my street. You're blocking traffic.

MELVIN

The only traffic we're blocking is that headed out for the Chicken Ranch, right, Sheriff?

A hushed crowd. Ed Earl cannot believe what he has heard. He pushes his hat brim up with a thumb and deliberately stalks up the steps. Standing six inches from Melvin, he looks him up and down, his gaze lingering on the outlandish, three-color cowboy boots on Melvin's feet.

ED EARL

Little buddy, you got two tickets up to now. Parading without a license and insulting me. Now, you either get this halloween carnival out of here, or I'm gonna lock up your ass 'til your baby's grown.

MELVIN

We're perfectly within the law, Sheriff. As a newsman, I've got First Amendment protection. The public has a right to know what's going on out there, and what kind of payoff you're accepting to protect that notorious house of ill repute.

There is a low moan from the crowd. The locals know that the Sheriff has a low threshold for insults. Ed Earl begins slowly.

ED EARL

First thing. First thing is, you're standing in Lanville County. Which, by my figurin', is about a hundred miles west of that stinkhole you call Houston. So I can't see it's any of your business what goes on out here.

CONTINUED



112

CONTINUED - 2

Melvin signals the cameraman to get a better angle on the Sheriff. The soundman follows with a directional mike, pointing it directly at Ed Earl.

ED EARL

Number two, number two is you ain't an officer of the law and I am. So don't go telling me what my goddamn job is or, I'll whip your butt 'til it looks like stripes on a barber pole.

The local people, according to their respective dispositions and allegiances, cheer or react in a shocked manner. Billy and his friends are delighted.

BILLY

Git 'im, Sheriff.

MODENE ENNIS

(chortling)

He may be mean, but he's ours!

ED EARL

Three! No sawed-off little pecker is gunna accuse me of takin' a bribe and live to tell it, 'cause I wear the badge in this goddamn county. So you listen good, you over-padded, televisin' turd, if I ever see you or any one of your other bastards in this town again, I'll knock you so flat you'll have to roll down your socks to shit.

EDSEL

That's tellin' him, Sheriff.

DULCIE MAE

(laughing)

Oh, my goodness!

Ed Earl gets out his gun and points it at Melvin.

ED EARL

Now, get out of here, you goddamn wig-wearin' citified son-of-a-bitch!

He fires his pistol into the air. Women scream, dogs bark and everyone starts to scatter. The cameraman trips over the camera and Melvin, in his hurry to flee, falls backward into

CONTINUED

112

CONTINUED - 3

the fountain and almost loses his wig. Ed Earl keeps shooting. The townspeople run for cover, but look on happily as Melvin and the TV crew hop in their two trucks and drive away. Ed Earl puts his gun back in the holster and mutters proudly to himself.

ED EARL

So long, pardner.

He looks around -- the crowd comes out from hiding and gives him a wild ovation. Billy is thrilled and points Ed Earl out to his friends.

BILLY

He's my friend. He's coming over to my house to watch the Aggie game.

Ed Earl is accepting the adulation of the crowd. He gets into his car. Dulcie Mae comes over.

DULCIE MAE

You were wonderful, Ed Earl.

ED EARL

Thanks, Dulcie.

DULCIE MAE

We've finished serving lunch, but I did save you a piece of meatloaf. It's your favorite.

ED EARL

Well, no thank you. I have an official report to make about all this and I've got to go up to the Chicken Ranch and talk to Miss Mona.

DULCIE MAE

Oh, of course.

ED EARL

Catch you later.

Ed Earl drives off to the cheers of the citizens. We push in on Dulcie Mae's face. She knows he's going out to celebrate with Mona and that he is in love with her.

113

INT. A TEXAS ROADSIDE BAR AND DANCE HALL - NIGHT

113

A fiddler is on the bandstand leading the band in a hoedown while the customers dance around the floor. Everyone is having a foot-stomping good time.

CONTINUED

113

CONTINUED

Mona and Ed Earl enter. She is in a simple dress and he is not in his uniform. They are in great high spirits and go over to the bar to order beer.

DISSOLVE TO

114

114

INT. AT THE TABLE - NIGHT

By the beers on the table we see the time has passed. The band is taking a break and we segue into a record playing on the jukebox. Mona, sitting at the table by herself, looks around as Ed Earl comes up to her.

MONA

Well, listen to that, it's my favorite Bob Wills song.

ED EARL

I know. Why do you think I put it on?

He offers her his hand. She smiles and takes it. They walk out to the dance floor and begin to dance as we hear Bob Wills sing "Faded Love."

BOB WILLS (v.o.)

(singing)

As I look at the letters  
That you wrote to me  
It's you that I'm thinkin' of.

As I read the lines  
That to me were so sweet  
I remember our faded love.

Mona joins in singing with the record.

MONA

I'll miss you darling  
More and more every day  
As heaven would miss the stars above.

With every heartbeat  
I will think of you  
I remember our faded love.

As they dance around the floor we:

DISSOLVE TO

115

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Ed Earl drives by in his truck with Mona snuggled up beside him.

115

116 INT. ED EARL'S TRUCK - NIGHT

116

Mona looks up at Ed Earl and smiles contentedly.

117 EXT. THE LAKE - NIGHT

117

We pull back from the campfire that Ed Earl has built by the shore to reveal he and Mona lying up against a log and looking up at the heavens. They are quietly enjoying the peace of the moment. Mona sighs.

MONA

Look at them stars. Ain't nothin' prettier than a Texas sky.

ED EARL

Ain't that the truth.

MONA

Hey! Did you see that shooting star?

ED EARL

Mmmmm.

MONA

Do you think that might have been a spaceship? Do you believe in that sort of thing?

ED EARL

Oh, sure. There's all kinds of strange things happening. I seen some pictures once of those little guys from outer space. They're about two feet high, have bald heads, tiny little legs and they got no peckers.

MONA

Well, then, I ain't interested and neither would any of my girls. You know, when I was little I used to dream about flying saucers coming down to get me and take me off to heaven. You know, like the angels. 'And I looked and behold a whirlwind came out of the north...and out of the midst of the fire came the likeness of four living creatures.'

ED EARL

Oh, yeah. What are you talking about?

MONA

That's from Ezekiel. Haven't you ever heard of Ezekiel in the Bible?

CONTINUED

117

CONTINUED

ED EARL

Sure, I've heard of the Bible. But the only Ezekiel I ever heard of is Ezekiel Peebles in the eighth grade. I busted his jaw once.

MONA

That was very Christian of you, Ed Earl.

ED EARL

Well, we were all Baptists in my family.

MONA

I never stayed with any one family long enough to become anything in particular. But I read the Bible and I do know about Jesus.

ED EARL

I think Jesus was a nice person. Must have been a good speaker.

MONA

You know, I knew a woman once who told me she had a vision of Jesus. He came right down and sat on the end of her bed one night. I believed her. I feel that could happen to me.

ED EARL

Well, if Jesus comes into your place honey, all hell's gonna break loose.

MONA

(laughing)

I guess you got a point, Ed Earl. But you know, Jesus was very good to Mary Magdalene and she was a fallen woman. Isn't that amazing. She was perhaps his best friend.

ED EARL

You mean Mary Magdalene was Jesus' girlfriend?

MONA

Well, not the way you're thinking. But Jesus did like to have a good time. People seem to forget that. You know, he went to a wedding once

CONTINUED

117 CONTINUED - 2

MONA (Cont'd)

and they ran out of wine. So you know what he did? He turned some water into wine.

ED EARL

Sounds like a man who knowed how to party.

MONA

Now, don't be sacrilegious, Ed Earl.

ED EARL

Oh, he knows I was kidding. He forgives me.

MONA

Yeah...I know he does. Ain't it funny. God can forgive you, but people can't. Why is that?

ED EARL

Because most people ain't too God-like, honey.

MONA

I know. I know.

A pause as they look at the sky. Ed Earl begins to chuckle.

ED EARL

That Melvin P. Thorpe is a sorry son-of-a-bitch.

MONA

(laughing)

Well, you sure sent him packing. I'm proud of you.

ED EARL

You think he's really running for office?

MONA

Why?

ED EARL

Well, I haven't told this to anyone yet, but I'm thinking of running for the legislature myself.

MONA

You serious, Ed Earl?

CONTINUED

117

CONTINUED - 3

ED EARL

Yeah, I'm serious. I've got my sights aimed higher than being a sheriff all my life. Besides, I think I could do some good. A lot of people don't think an honest man can be elected, but I don't believe that. This is a great country and we've still got it in us.

MONA

Well, you've got my vote. I might even go register.

ED EARL

I'd be a good politician, Mona. And you know why? Because I'd tell the truth. Nobody does that anymore and, by God, I'm going to give it a shot.

MONA

I didn't know you had dreams that big, Ed Earl.

ED EARL

Well, it's one dream I believe I could pull off. People like me. It's natural to like me. You know, people like you, too. You'd be surprised if you took a poll around town.

MONA

Really?

ED EARL

I hear it all the time. You're a well-liked lady.

MONA

Well, I always believed if you see somebody without a smile, give them yours.

ED EARL

I like that. Do you think I could borrow that slogan when I run for the legislature... 'I always believed if you see somebody without a smile, give them yours.' ...I could put that on my card.

CONTINUED

117

CONTINUED - 4

MONA

Oh, Ed Earl. I guess I'm just not a person who believes in dreams. I believe in reality. Dreams have never gotten me anywhere.

ED EARL

But how about when you were a kid. You must have wanted to be something.

MONA

Promise you won't laugh?

ED EARL

Sure.

MONA

I used to think I wanted to be a dancer. I wanted to be a ballerina. One of the first things I can remember was a little ballerina on top of a music box. I would just watch her for hours dancing round and round.

ED EARL

Well, I don't think it's too late for you to be a ballerina.

MONA

Oh, hell, Ed Earl. I'm so top-heavy, I have a hard enough time balancing these now without getting up on my toes.

ED EARL

Mona, you're wonderful.

MONA

Thank you...you know, I don't see anyone except you, Ed Earl. Not anymore. You can't say the same, can you.

ED EARL

I don't go to bed with anyone else.

MONA

You don't?

ED EARL

Not for three years now. You didn't know that, did you?

CONTINUED



117 CONTINUED - 5

11'

MONA

No, I didn't.

ED EARL

Well, I figure there's nothing better after you've had the best.

MONA

I like that. If I ever run for the legislature, I'm gonna put that on my card.

They laugh. They kiss. They kiss again and fall into a passionate and loving embrace.

118 INT. MAYOR'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

118

The Mayor is watching television.

ANNOUNCER

Next up, Melvin P. Thorpe continues his expose on the Chicken Ranch with a violent demonstration in the Gilbert town square.

The Mayor reacts to seeing the announcement on television.

MAYOR

Great God from Goldsborough! Doreen. Doreen! Run git my heart pills!

119 INT. ED EARL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

119

In the darkened room the phone is ringing. It rings three or four times. A hand comes out from under the blankets, turns on the overhead light and answers the phone. It is Ed Earl. He sticks his head out from under the blankets.

ED EARL

Yes. Yes?

120 INT. MAYOR'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

120

The Mayor is on the telephone.

MAYOR

Ed Earl, you better turn on Channel 4. That Melvin P. Thorpe idiot has got you on TV again.

121 INT. ED EARL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

121

Ed Earl turns to Mona.

ED EARL

Honey, turn on the television.  
Channel 4. The Mayor says that  
Melvin P. Thorpe is spewing off at  
the mouth again.

Mona reaches for the remote control for the TV on the night  
table.

ED EARL

Calm down, Rufus, it can't be as  
bad as all that.

Mona turns on the television and we see Melvin seated at the  
news desk giving his version of what happened in the Gilbert  
town square.

MELVIN

What happened to me, as an  
individual, is not important.  
But what Sheriff Dodd did to a  
constitutionally licensed newsman  
and a good tax-paying American  
citizen is important! It calls up  
old dark versions of Mussolini's  
Brown Shirts and the Nazi terrors.  
I think the film speaks for itself.

On the television screen we see an edited version of Ed  
Earl's speech:

ED EARL

No sawed-off little bleep is gunna  
accuse me of takin' a bribe and  
live to tell it...

(fires gun)

...'cause I wear the badge in this  
bleep county. So you listen good,  
you bleep-bleep, bleep-bleep...

(fires gun,  
same shot)

...if I ever see you or any one of  
you other bleep in this town again,  
I'll knock you so flat you'll have  
to bleep-bleep, bleep-bleep,  
bleep-bleep!

(fires gun,  
same shot)

Ed Earl and Mona watch in open-mouthed horror.

CONTINUED

121 CONTINUED

12.

MELVIN (v.o.)

Is this the kind of man we want running our law enforcement? Is this the kind of foul-mouthed example we want to set for our children?

Mona sadly shakes her head.

MONA

Ed Earl, that man has made a fool of you.

Ed Earl, in shock, absently hangs up the phone.

122 INT. SHERIFF'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

122

The Mayor, Edsel and C.J. Vernon are pacing around Ed Earl's outer office. The two phones are ringing and Rita has her hands full. Deputy Fred waits. The Mayor takes out his watch.

MAYOR

I've had calls from four preachers, six deacons and the presidents of two garden clubs.

RITA

(hanging up)

The phones have been ringing just like that all morning.

MAYOR

Don't know why I let people talk me into serving as the Mayor of this incorporated sand trap anyway.

(looking at  
his watch)

What the heck is keeping him?

RITA

He'll be along.

DEPUTY FRED

My wife couldn't believe what she saw last night. They bleeped him out, but she read his lips on every 'hell', 'goddamn' and 'shit'.

EDSEL

Did you hear some folks are getting up a petition to close the Chicken Ranch?

CONTINUED

122

CONTINUED

122

C.J.

All we wanted to do was keep it quiet. Now, thanks to Ed Earl, it's getting to be the hottest thing on the air since The Gong Show.

Ed Earl enters and stops at Rita's desk for his messages.

RITA

Mornin', Sheriff. Here's your calls.

ED EARL

Mornin', Rita. Mornin', fellers. I guess you're waiting to talk to me.

MAYOR

We sure are. You don't know the trouble you've stirred up with this Chicken Ranch business.

They follow Ed Earl into his office.

123

INT. SHERIFF'S INNER OFFICE - DAY

123

C.J.

Dammit, Ed Earl, if you aren't a pluperfect fool.

ED EARL

Maybe so. I've got calls here from a dozen shocked citizens telling me we've got a whorehouse operating in this county...for about a hundred and fifty years!

MAYOR

Ed Earl, you can set up speed traps to catch the tourists, you can look the other way when the wrong kid swipes a car to go joyriding, hell, you can even allow Miss Mona to run her place out there. But the one thing you can't get away with is broadcastin' gutter talk on TV!

ED EARL

How was I supposed to know they were taking pictures?

CONTINUED

C.J.

What did you figure the cameras were for?

ED EARL

You know, I'm getting just a little sick of all this bad mouthin'. Hell, the Chicken Ranch don't give me half as much trouble as those all night stag parties out at the Legionnaires Hall.

C.J.

(embarrassed)

That ain't fair, ding it!

MAYOR

There's only one thing to do and that's close the place down before we all go to hell in a handbasket.

ED EARL

Close it down! Oh, you were all willing to go along with Miss Mona when things were running good because she brought business to the town and made civic contributions. But now that she's in trouble, you're all about to turn tail and run like rats from a burning barn.

EDSEL

That's just it, Ed Earl. But who's going to put out the fire?

MAYOR

Look, if you won't close her down, at least tell her to lay low for a couple of months.

C.J.

Just until the heat wears off.

MAYOR

Give it two months. What's two months?

ED EARL

Dammit, Rufus. I don't want anybody telling me how to do my job. I'm still the law here and I'll make up my own mind about what's gotta be done!

124

INT. CHICKEN RANCH - MONA'S BEDROOM - DAY

124

Ed Earl is talking to Mona.

ED EARL

Two months. What's two months?

MONA

Shut down for two months! That's a hell of a lot of overhead to pay out when a company's cash is not coming in. What am I supposed to tell my girls?

ED EARL

Maybe it won't be two months. The holidays are coming up. Maybe in a couple of weeks it will have all blown over and you can start letting your regular customers in the back door.

MONA

You know, I warned you before you left yesterday about losing your temper...shouting and carrying on.

ED EARL

Last night you said you were proud of me.

MONA

Last night I wasn't on the eleven o'clock news!

ED EARL

I didn't know they were going to make me out to look like an idiot. I don't understand this electronic bullshit. How was I supposed to handle it?

MONA

That's your job. That's what you're paid for.

ED EARL

I know what my job is. I know I can have this whole place shut down in a New York minute. But all I'm asking for is a little cooperation from you so we can get through this difficult situation with as little trouble as possible.

CONTINUED

124

CONTINUED

124

MONA

Okay. Okay. I'll shut down.

ED EARL

You promise?

MONA

What do you want, a written contract? I give you my word.

ED EARL

I'm really sorry this had to happen.

MONA

Don't feel sorry for me. I started out poor and worked my way up to outcast.

ED EARL

Mona, I hate this, dammit, I really do. I don't want this to hurt our relationship, but I really believe this is the best answer. If you'll just trust me.

Mona is quite moved with his honest expression of emotion. She turns, smiles, and gives him a kiss.

MONA

Oh, you big cowboy, I do trust you. Ain't I always?

She gives him a hug. He kisses her lightly on the cheek and, with a flourish, puts on his hat. He turns and opens the door.

125

INT. CHICKEN RANCH - STAIRCASE - DAY

125

Ed Earl is coming down the stairs just as Jewel, carrying a pile of sheets, is coming up.

JEWEL

Well, if it ain't the celebrated cussing Sheriff of Lanville County. How are you Sheriff?

ED EARL

Fine. How are you, Porky?

JEWEL

(laughing)

Now, Sheriff, I been real good all week. I dropped six pounds.

CONTINUED

125

CONTINUED

125

ED EARL

What did you do, lose a finger?

Ed Earl continues down the stairs and out the door. Jewel, laughing, walks up to Mona.

MONA

I've just promised the Sheriff to shut the place down for two months.

JEWEL

What? How can you promise that? What about the football game celebration tomorrow night?

MONA

Oh, I forgot.

JEWEL

It's the Thanksgiving game, Miss Mona. That's real special.

MONA

Yes, I know. Well, okay. But we'll be closed for all regulars. Do you think that'll be all right?

JEWEL

I'm sure it will, honey. That party's a tradition.

126

EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - DAY - HIGH SHOT FROM HELICOPTER

126

The traditional Thanksgiving Day rivalry between the Texas Aggies and the Texas Longhorns is in full swing.

127

INT. BROADCAST BOOTH - DAY

127

The ANNOUNCER, looking down over the field, is talking into the microphone.

ANNOUNCER

Well folks, this game has turned into a real stem-winder. The Texas Aggies, favored to lock up the Southwest Conference and waltz into the Cotton Bowl in Dallas for a happy New Year, are fighting for their football lives.



128 EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

128

On the field, we see regular football action as the Announcer's voice continues.

ANNOUNCER (v.o.)

The Longhorns are playing tough defensive ball, making this traditional Thanksgiving Day classic one for the record books.

129 INT. DULCIE MAE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

129

Ed Earl and Billy are watching the game on the television in the living room. Thanksgiving decorations are on the mantle. In the kitchen, Dulcie Mae takes the turkey out of the oven. She looks over at her son sitting happily with Ed Earl on the couch.

BILLY

Come on, Aggies, plow those Longhorns!

Ed Earl laughs and pops a beer.

130 INT. CHICKEN RANCH - MAIN ROOM - DAY

130

Some of the girls are putting up the decorations while the TV with the football game plays in the parlor. Out in the hall, Angel is on the phone.

ANGEL

Well, I sure do hope Mummy will be home for Christmas, punkin'. Now you have a good Thanksgiving and put Grandma back on...Mummy loves you, baby....

Jewel walks by with double sets of colored crepe paper ribbons and holds them up for the girls in the main room.

JEWEL

We'll string up the white first and then see who wins before we add the orange or maroon.

CONTINUED

130

CONTINUED

GINGER

I cain't stand it if them Aggies win.

DAWN

What do you mean?

GINGER

They're such animals. Always yelling and jumping about and saying 'Yeee-haaw!'

ELOISE

I like that.

RUBY RAE

We had two Aggies here last year. They went upstairs to shoot craps -- and blew a hole in the toilet.

The girls all laugh, but Shy is a little backward.

SHY

Really? What did Miss Mona say?

JEWEL

She's putting you on, darlin'.

RUBY RAE

The hell I am. Those boys are dumb.

GINGER

Dumb ain't the word. You hear about the time the Aggie coach went up to the quarterback and asked him, 'Do you think you can pass this ball?' 'Hell, yes,' said the Aggie quarterback.

GINGER AND RUBY RAE

(laughing  
together)

If I can swallow it.

The girls all join in laughing and now Shy sees that they are making Aggie jokes. She smiles. Ginger looks over at the television set.

GINGER

Come on, Longhorns! Hold that line!

131 INT. THE BROADCAST BOOTH - DAY

131

## ANNOUNCER

What a finish we've got here, folks. The Aggies are out of the huddle, twenty short ticks of the clock from oblivion. The underdog Longhorns lead twelve to seven, with the Aggies in business on the thirty-five yard line.

132 EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

132

We see the play as it is described.

## ANNOUNCER (v.o.)

Bubba Shrake takes the snap and drops back to pass. He's got good protection...he's looking deep. Shrake throws over the middle.

(shouts)

Sliney's got it at the five! He's hit and he's short of the goalline. He's stopped short! And he calls time! Time out on the field with three seconds left.

133 INT. TV STATION - DAY

133

Two ENGINEERS are watching the game on monitors.

## FIRST ENGINEER

I'll bet those boys are creaming in their pants. You know that whichever team wins gets a celebration dinner tonight at the Chicken Ranch.

## SECOND ENGINEER

Yeah. Course, it don't matter what the scoreboard says, the real winner of today's game is gonna be Miss Mona.

They laugh. We pan off the Enginerrrs and see that Melvin has overheard their conversation. He looks up at the monitor and smiles with gleeful expectation.

134 INT. THE BROADCAST BOOTH - DAY

134

## ANNOUNCER

Just three seconds left on the scoreboard clock. The Aggies trailing twelve to seven on the five-yard line, needing a touchdown to win.

135

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

We see the action described by the Announcer.  
We see the action described by

ANNOUNCER (v.o.)  
ANNOUNCER (v.o.)

The Aggies come out of the huddle  
up to the line. Charlie Wilson  
split right out wide. Sliney in  
the slot.

(growing  
excitement)

Shrake takes the snap, throws to  
Cartwright, who swings wide to the  
right. He's trapped behind the  
line. He's gonna throw deep in  
the endzone and... Sliney's got  
it! The Aggies win it. The Aggies  
win it thirteen to twelve!

Bedlam reigns. The crowd is pouring onto the field. The  
Aggie band is playing and marching in celebration. The  
players run to the locker room.  
players run to the locker room.

136  
136

INT. DULCIE MAE'S LIVING ROOM = DAY

136

Billy is jumping up and down on the sofa with delight, while  
Ed Earl laughs and claps his hands.  
Ed Earl laughs and claps his hands.

137  
137

INT. THE CHICKEN RANCH - MAIN ROOM = DAY

137

Ginger enters and looks at the girls. The celebration is  
playing on the television.  
playing on the television.

GINGER  
GINGER

Who won?  
who won?

Beatrice holds up the Texas A & M pennants they are  
beginning to hang on the walls.  
Beatrice holds up the Texas A & M pennants they are  
beginning to hang on the walls.

BEATRICE  
BEATRICE

The Aggies.  
The Aggies.

GINGER  
GINGER

Oh, shit.  
Oh, shit.

Ruby Rae looks over at Ginger and, as if on cue, the other  
girls join in....  
Ruby Rae looks over at Ginger and, as if on cue, the other  
girls join in....

GIRLS  
GIRLS

Yeeehaaw!  
Yeeehaaw!

138

INT. FOOTBALL LOCKER ROOM - DAY

The Aggies come down into the locker room, all breathless and excited.

AGGIES

Yeeehaaaw!

Senator Wingwood and the alumni welcome them.

SENATOR

Boys! Boys! That was the greatest victory since General Eisenhower won! You make me glad to be an Aggie. I swear, I could break down and cry like a baby, I'm so flushed with pride....

One of the Aggies is tossing bottles of Lone Star Beer to his teammates as they enter. He tosses one to the Senator.

AGGIE #1

Have a Lone Star on us, Senator.

SENATOR

Now, you boys know senators don't drink! It ain't good for the Baptist vote.

He pops it open and it sprays across the room. One of the Aggies does a few bars of a foot-stompin' cleat dance. The others cheer for him. A lot of "yee-haw's."

AGGIE #2

Hey, Senator, you ain't forgot you was gonna take us to the Chicken Ranch, have you?

SENATOR

(leering)  
I always keep my campaign promises!

Cheers from the team.

SENATOR

Yes sir, the Chicken Ranch is a fine institution and I'm proud to have it in my district. And to hell with what Melvin P. Thorpe says. So let's get a move on and we'll see you boys at Miss Mona's.

He and his party exit.

CONTINUED

138

CONTINUED

The Aggies all cheer and the true celebration starts. They are pulling off their pads and uniforms. Various angles of the different players like LEROY SLINEY, the young wide receiver, and BARNEY SCRUGGS, the ox-like defensive lineman. They begin to sing.

AGGIES

(singing)

We're gonna whomp  
And stomp  
And whoop it up tonight  
Those little gals won't never ever  
Be the same.

They're gonna love it when we whomp  
And stomp  
And whoop it up all right  
It's even better than an Aggie  
Football game.

BARNEY

(dumbly)

Better than a football game?

139

INT. SHOWERS - DAY

139

Various angles of the Aggies showering.

AGGIES

And then we're gonna show them all  
A thing or two  
We're gonna demonstrate  
Just what  
A champion can do  
Yee-Haw!

We're gonna play 'em out and  
Lay 'em out tonight  
They won't have never seen nobody  
Quite like me -- huh.

140

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

140

The Aggies come out of the showers and, snapping their towels and horsing around, go to their lockers to begin getting dressed.

AGGIES

We're gonna wham and bam and  
Thank you ma'am tonight  
I swear I don't know how they'll  
Stand such ecstasy -- huh  
Right between the goalpost.

CONTINUED

140

CONTINUED

140

They put on their blue jeans and cowboy boots and sing.

AGGIES

We been deprived so long  
But now we're gettin' some  
I bet the girls are countin' up  
The minutes 'til we come.

An Aggie pops up from behind a locker.

AGGIE #3

They ain't the only ones.

Peach-fuzzed, clear-voiced Leroy Sliney pushes a laundry cart down the middle of the locker room.

LEROY

Seventy-five miles until we get to  
heaven.

AGGIES

Seventy-five miles until our  
Plans are laid  
Seventy-five miles until we get to  
The Chicken Ranch  
Where history  
And Aggie boys  
Get made.

The boys spin the cart around and begin the big dance number.

After a spectacular series of acrobatics and clogging, the Aggies, now fully dressed with shirts and hats, charge out of the front door.

141

EXT. A ROAD - DAY

141

From a helicopter we see the Aggie bus driving down a country road. We push in just as Leroy sticks his head out a window.

LEROY

Twenty-two miles until we get  
To heaven.

Other Aggies stick their heads out.

AGGIES

Twenty-two miles until our  
Plans are laid  
Twenty-two miles until we get  
To the Chicken Ranch.

142 EXT. AGGIE BUS - DAY

142

The whole team, with their hats in their hands, joyfully sticks their heads out the windows.

AGGIES

Where history  
And Aggie boys  
Get made.

The rear tire blows out and the truck careens to a halt by the side of the road.

143 INT. CHICKEN RANCH - UPSTAIRS ROOM - DUSK

143

Jewel is distributing some of the ball gowns to the girls. Shy picks one up and is admiring it, but Ginger is very bored with the idea.

GINGER

Do we have to wear these ball gowns again?

JEWEL

Yes, you do, and I don't want to hear any bitchin' about it. Miss Mona tries to create something special for these boys -- it's like a graduation dance.

144 EXT. ROAD - DUSK

144

Silhouetted against the setting sun, the Aggies are packed, stacked and hanging all over a small pickup truck driven by a somewhat confused old farmer. Leroy is holding onto the roof with one hand and sings excitedly.

LEROY

One more mile until we get  
To heaven.

AGGIES

One more mile until our  
Plans are laid.

145 EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - DUSK

145

The pickup truck drives up the hill to the front gate.

CONTINUED



145 CONTINUED

145

## AGGIES

One more mile until we get  
To the Chicken Ranch  
Where history  
And Aggie boys  
Get made.

Leaping and jumping off the pickup truck, the Aggies dance up to the front porch and knock on the Chicken Ranch door.

146 INT. CHICKEN RANCH - DUSK

146

Jewel opens the door and welcomes them. They enter politely, hats in hand. Senator Wingwood has already arrived and he greets them when suddenly all heads turn to Miss Mona as she makes one of her grand entrances down the stairs.

## SENATOR

(to Mona)

Howdy, ma'am. I'm Senator Wingwood of the 19th District and Aggie Class of '49. Mighty proud to meetcha.

## MONA

Meet me? Come on, Charlie. How's Mary Margaret and the kids?

The Aggies all laugh and the Senator is momentarily embarrassed.

## SENATOR

Hell, Miss Mona. I didn't think you'd remember.

## MONA

You remember to bring the check?

## SENATOR

I got it right here.

He produces it from his coat pocket and hands it to her.

## MONA

It's a business doing pleasure with you, Senator.

She rings the bell.

## MONA

Come on, boys. We've got a surprise for you.

She leads everyone out to the back.

147

INT. CHICKEN RANCH COURTYARD - NIGHT

147

Miss Mona enters with the Aggies as the girls are coming down the backstairs or waiting beneath the colored lanterns strung out over the punch bowl. They are all wearing their ball gowns and look slightly reminiscent of a high school prom. The Aggies break into whistles and catcalls and begin pairing off for an encore of the Aggie dance. Leroy spots Shy and he pairs up with her. Mona signals Ginger to take the Senator off her hands.

The high point of the number comes when the girls snap off their ball gowns (held in place by Velcro) and appear in their latest Frederick's of Hollywood underwear.

AGGIES

Yeeeehaaaaaw!

The stomping becomes frenetic and the dance ends with the couples facing off inside or upstairs looking for a bedroom. The Senator goes with Ginger. Leroy goes off with Shy. Mona looks over at Jewel, gives her a look that says "well, that's that," and turns off the party lights.

148

EXT. DULCIE MAE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

148

Ed Earl is leaving after having Thanksgiving dinner with Dulcie Mae.

DULCIE MAE

Thank you for spending time with Billy. He really idolizes you.

ED EARL

Yeah, I know. He's a great kid. And you're a great cook.

DULCIE MAE

Yeah, I know.

They laugh.

DULCIE MAE

I hope everything works out with this Melvin P. Thorpe business. I know it's been worrying you.

ED EARL

It'll all blow over soon.

DULCIE MAE

Of course it will. After all, the Chicken Ranch has been there for years. And Miss Mona...well, she does a lot of good in town.

CONTINUED

148

CONTINUED

148

ED EARL

Yes. She does.

(pause)

Well, it's late.

(kisses her  
on the cheek)Thank you, Dulcie. You're real  
sweet and you're real special to me.

DULCIE MAE

Thank you, Ed Earl.

ED EARL

Good night, honey.

He hops in his car and drives home.

149

EXT. GILBERT TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

149

Deputy Fred is making his rounds, walking across the deserted town square. A TV van goes by. He stops and looks. A car follows. He looks again. Melvin P. Thorpe in the Watchdog van drives by. The Deputy scratches his head and thinks about that for a moment.

150

INT. CHICKEN RANCH - MONA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

150

Mona is in her bedroom going over her accounts. She opens her ledgers and sits at her desk.

151

INT. A ROOM IN THE CHICKEN RANCH - NIGHT

151

Leroy is contentedly smoking a cigarette. We pan over at Shy looking at him demurely from the pillow.

152

INT. CHICKEN RANCH - TV PARLOR - NIGHT

152

Jewel has her feet up watching an old movie on television. The house is very quiet.

153

INT. ED EARL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

153

Ed Earl, in his boxer shorts, is brushing his teeth getting ready for bed. There is a knock at the front door. He goes to answer it.

154

INT. ED EARL'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

154

Ed Earl crosses the living room, turning on the lights as he goes. He opens the door. It's Deputy Fred.

CONTINUED

154

CONTINUED

154

DEPUTY FRED

Good evening, Sheriff.

ED EARL

This better be important.

DEPUTY FRED

Well, I think it is. I was making my rounds in town when I just saw that Melvin P. Thorpe drive through with some other fellers on their way to the Chicken Ranch.

ED EARL

Well, he's going to be real disappointed. There's nothing going on up there. Miss Mona's shut down for two months on my orders.

DEPUTY FRED

No, she ain't, Sheriff. Hell...  
(laughs)

I saw those Aggie boys up there tonight celebrating to beat the band.

ED EARL

Huh? Huh...Holy shit!

155

EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - NIGHT

155

Everyone has gone to bed. The lights are low. We pan down from Mona at her desk in her bedroom to shadows creeping along the Chicken Ranch wall. It is Melvin and his crew of cameramen and reporters (eight in all). They reach the lattice door to the backyard and, with a pair of chain cutters, cut the lock. Melvin turns to the camera, signals to switch it on and addresses his audience.

MELVIN

Now we're going to take you into the whorehouse itself.

156

EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - BACK COURTYARD - NIGHT

156

Melvin and his crew creep along the back porch and sneak inside.

157

INT. CHICKEN RANCH - NIGHT

157

They pass the parlor where Jewel has fallen asleep in front of a television station that has gone off the air. Melvin

CONTINUED

157 CONTINUED

157

positions his men near the light switches, then stands by the bell and gives the signal.

MELVIN

Okay, everybody up!

The bell clangs, all the lights in the house turn on and with a charging yell, Melvin and his crew go running up the stairs and through the whorehouse. Jewel wakes up and falls off her chair.

158 INT. CHICKEN RANCH - MONA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

158

Mona looks up and reacts to the noise.

159 INT. CHICKEN RANCH - VARIOUS ROOMS - NIGHT

159

The still photographers throw open the doors and burst in, snapping pictures with flash cameras of couples in bed. Girls scream, boys jump out of bed and start putting on their clothes, knocking over tables and water bowls as they do so.

160 INT. CHICKEN RANCH - ANOTHER ROOM - NIGHT

160

Melvin bursts into a room, followed by his cameraman. He turns to address his television audience while the startled customer in bed looks around.

MELVIN

Now we're going to talk to some of the girls and their customers.

161 INT. CHICKEN RANCH - STAIRS - NIGHT

161

The place is in pandemonium. Boys and girls are running everywhere, screaming and shouting "raid." Mona comes out of her room and sees Jewel coming up the stairs.

MONA

What's going on?

JEWEL

It's that Melvin P. Thorpe sucker and his TV reporters.

Mona runs back into her room while Jewel grabs a still photographer who is running by her and starts belting him in the mouth. One of his friends comes to his assistance and Jewel karate chops him over the bannister.

- 162 INT. CHICKEN RANCH - MONA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 162  
Mona dials the Sheriff's office to bring assistance.
- 163 INT. CHICKEN RANCH UPSTAIRS - NIGHT 163  
A montage of shots. An Aggie gets out from under a bed asking, "What's up?" Another Aggie leaves his girl, saying "Wait until next year" and rushes off. We see a foursome in bed surprised by a photographer, while in another room a boy and girl are so stoned out on a joint that they look around and mutter "Far out!"
- 164 INT. CHICKEN RANCH - MONA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 164  
Mona is getting no response from her phone call. She hangs up in disgust.
- 165 INT. CHICKEN RANCH - ANOTHER ROOM - NIGHT 165  
Melvin bursts in on the Senator, who, with a highball in his hand, is being doused in baby powder by a blonde. Melvin sticks a microphone in front of the startled Senator's face.
- MELVIN  
Senator, the eyes of Texas are upon  
you.
- The Senator looks stupidly about in the haloed light of the powder-filled air. He sees the television camera and jumps out of bed and runs into a closet, slamming the door behind him. Melvin laughs.
- MELVIN  
I think we've got enough. Let's  
get out of here.
- He and his crew run off down the stairs.
- 166 INT. CHICKEN RANCH - MONA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 166  
Mona takes down a rifle from her wall and goes out to the landing.
- 167 EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - NIGHT 167  
Football players are running out of the house and jumping into the Aggie bus. With his siren wailing, Ed Earl and Deputy Fred are driving up to the Chicken Ranch. Melvin and

CONTINUED

167

CONTINUED

167

his crew are hopping into their vans and the car. Ed Earl drives up in a cloud of dust and parks. He gets out and looks at the scrambling Aggies. Mona appears at the front door with her rifle. Just then, Melvin drives from behind the bus and speeds off towards the front gate. He passes by Ed Earl and laughs as he snaps a picture. We push in on Ed Earl. He shakes his head with anger.

ED EARL

Holy, shit.

168

INT. CHICKEN RANCH - MONA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

168

Ed Earl and Mona are in the midst of a furious argument.

ED EARL

You promised me, dammit! You gave me your word and I took it. I'm the law. I could have....

MONA

The law! A gang of crazies break into my house, invading my privacy, taking pictures. Just tell me what the law is going to do about that! I'll tell you. Nothing.

ED EARL

They wouldn't have any reason to be here if you'd done what you said you'd do. I trusted you. That's what hurts. I trusted you!

MONA

Don't talk to me about trust. I trusted you to protect me. So I made a mistake tonight, okay!

ED EARL

If that's your idea of apologizing....

MONA

I ain't apologizing. I'm a businesswoman paying out double taxes and I expect a little security for my money. Where were you? Where were your deputies?

CONTINUED

ED EARL

I was at home because I thought....

MONA

When Sheriff Jack Roy Wallace was running things, this could never have happened. But you, you just can't handle the job!

ED EARL

Goddamit, Mona, you're getting me mad!

MONA

That's right, cuss and shout just like on TV. You're still a kid playing at being a cowboy. You're never going to grow up. You use me as your mistress, you use that damn Dulcie Mae in town as your on-call wife, you even use her son so you can play weekend daddy. But that's all it is, Ed Earl, playing. And that's all you are, a kid playing at being a man.

Ed Earl grabs his hat and turns in the doorway.

ED EARL

I don't have to listen to this crap. Just remember, I'm wearing the badge and the only reason your doors stay open is because of me.

MONA

Don't threaten me. I'm telling the truth and you know it. Your big dreams of going to the legislature, that's all they are...dreams. 'Cause you'll always be what you are right now -- a chicken-shit sheriff in a chicken-shit town.

ED EARL

Maybe so, but that's a damn sight better than being a whore!

As soon as he said it, Ed Earl wishes he hadn't. Mona turns to him. Tears are welling up in her eyes.

Ed Earl slams his fist against the dressing table and breaks the glass. He turns around and storms out. Mona watches and listens as he goes down the stairs and out the front door. She falls down on the bed and sobs uncontrollably.



169

EXT. TEXAS LANDSCAPE - SUNRISE

169

In the early morning light we discover Ed Earl, unshaven and remorseful, having stayed up all night strolling by the riverbank, alone with his thoughts.

After a series of shots, he begins to sing.

ED EARL

Sometimes I get crazy  
As fools are known to do  
Lose my head in spite of  
Everything I stand to lose  
What is it in a man  
That makes him act like  
Such a fool  
I swear I never knew  
But always needed to.

Stubborn pride is just the way of stallions  
I suppose  
Even love can't change  
The things I want to change the most  
And it's pride that's got me standin'  
When I should be on my knees  
Making apologies  
But it's so damn hard for me.

Oh, but now and again  
I wish I'd a been a poet  
So I could know the perfect lines  
To say  
Have some great romantic way  
To show it  
Be the hero ridin' up  
To save the day.

And I'd go ridin' high  
Like a knight in shining armor  
Just sweep her up and race into the sun  
But I don't have no magic ways  
To charm her  
No, it's lonely in the fields  
Where stallions run.

And I'd like to say I love you  
But those words just don't come  
Words like that are no match  
For the kind that rule my tongue  
But I can only hope she knows  
I love her anyway  
No matter what I say  
Oh, but I never say.

CONTINUED

169

CONTINUED

169

ED EARL (Cont'd)

Oh, now and again  
 I wish I'd a been a poet  
 So I could know the perfect lines  
 To say  
 And have some great romantic way  
 To show it  
 Be the hero that rides up  
 To save the day.

But I'd never be a knight  
 In shining armor  
 And as for poets  
 I was never one  
 I'm just a fool that must  
 Restore his honor  
 Oh, the winds are cold  
 That blow where stallions run.

I'm just a fool that must  
 Restore his honor  
 Or only walk in fields  
 Where stallions run.

170

INT. NATIONAL TV NEWS - EVENING

170

WALTER CRONKITE, at the anchor desk, is reporting the  
 Chicken Ranch story to all America.

WALTER

Legalized prostitution -- pro or  
 con -- is in the news again today.  
 We now take you to Jeff Gerald in  
 Gilbert, Texas.

We pan off the "No Entry" sign across the front road leading  
 to the Chicken Ranch up to JEFF GERALD with a microphone,  
 talking into the camera. Some deputies and a few sightseers  
 are parked in the background.

GERALD

The Chicken Ranch, the legendary  
 long-running bawdy house is showing  
 little activity after the  
 disclosure yesterday of the  
 Thanksgiving night raid. A deputy  
 at the front gate keeps away  
 onlookers and potential customers,

CONTINUED

GERALD (Cont'd)

while up at the house, the shutters are closed and the principals not talking.

We cut to newsreel film shot earlier where we catch a glimpse of Mona behind the window curtains and Jewel shooing off reporters from the front porch. We also see a cut of Ed Earl walking from his car to his office, refusing to talk to the press.

GERALD (v.o.)

The Sheriff of Gilbert, Ed Earl Dodd, refused interviews; while in Houston the man who launched the campaign, consumer advocate Melvin P. Thorpe, held a press conference this afternoon.

We cut to filmed footage shot in Melvins's studio.

MELVIN

I have a report here that says the Chicken Ranch is involved with and under the influence of organized crime and I will be taking this report to Austin in the hope that the Governor will come out of his long silence on this issue and uphold the law.

After an establishing shot of the Austin Capitol, we cut to a press conference in Senator Wingwood's office.

GERALD (v.o.)

At the Capitol today, the Governor made no statement, but Senator Charles Wingwood, who was a principal figure in the Watchdog News raid, also held a press conference explaining his involvement.

The Senator nervously reads his prepared statement.

SENATOR

I have no independent recollection of going to the Chicken Ranch and I can only say as the most dedicated anti-communist in the state

CONTINUED

SENATOR (Cont'd)  
legislature that I must have been  
drugged by communists or communist  
sympathizers and placed there to  
harm my reputation and good name...  
So I am now calling on every  
freedom-loving American to call the  
Governor and have this shameful  
place shut down.

In the town square of Gilbert, Gerald has set up his cameras  
and is about to interview some local citizens.

GERALD  
Reaction across the state is split  
fifty/fifty, but in the town of  
Gilbert itself, the Chicken Ranch  
has many supporters.

We cut to Edsel, the newspaper editor.

EDSEL  
I've never seen anything bad come  
from it and I've lived here all my  
life. It brings in business for  
the community and they pay taxes,  
same as anyone else. Besides,  
no one ever was forced to go up  
there.

We cut to HENRY, a tough, redneck farmer.

HENRY  
The Chicken Ranch? I think it's a  
good idea. You take a lot of young  
boys, they're going to be looking  
for women. If they can't find 'em,  
they'll rape 'em, and if they don't  
do that, they'll run to other women  
and get diseases. Those girls went  
to doctors.

We cut to DORA, a sweet and proper old lady in town.

DORA  
My Frank, when he was alive, used  
to go up there every Saturday. I  
took it as a blessing. Course it  
was different then. Nowadays women  
enjoy doing that sort of thing  
themselves -- least that's what  
I've been told.

CONTINUED

170

CONTINUED - 3

170

We cut to Gerald for the wrap-up. He is standing in front of the Gilbert courthouse.

GERALD

Although petitions are being circulated to 'Save the Chicken Ranch' this bumper sticker is already beginning to appear around the state:

He holds up a sticker saying "Pluck the Chicken Ranch."

GERALD

And so, as feminists line up behind the bill for the decriminalization of prostitution already in the legislature and as traditionalists and fundamentalists lobby for its defeat, the fate of the Chicken Ranch rests with the Governor, who today was again unavailable for comment. Jeff Gerald, CBS News in Gilbert, Texas.

171

INT. STUDY - NIGHT

171

The little man in the big chair watches the close of the report. He picks up a glass of water and drops in an Alka-Seltzer.

172

INT. CHICKEN RANCH - MONA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

172

Mona has been watching the Cronkite report with Jewel. She turns it off. They both know the serious trouble they're in.

JEWEL

I hate admittin' I was wrong, Miss Mona, but with television broadcasting this from hell to breakfast, we should have done what the Sheriff said and kept this place closed.

MONA

It was my decision, Jewel. It was my fault.

CONTINUED

172

CONTINUED

172

JEWEL

He ain't gonna be able to stop it,  
this time, is he?

MONA

I think he'd probably like to, but  
he's out of his league. He doesn't  
know how to fight them. He's just  
a good old boy that will never grow  
up.

JEWEL

Honey, you see everything in this  
profession, but one thing I ain't  
even seen, man or woman, is a  
grownup. Don't be too hard on  
him. He loves you.

MONA

He's never said it.

JEWEL

Some men can't say the words,  
honey, but that don't mean they  
don't feel it in their heart.

MONA

Maybe it's just as well. I set my  
course a long time ago and I can't  
be changing now.

173

INT. DULCIE MAE'S CAFE - NIGHT

173

The Mayor, Edsel, C.J. and Mansel are talking over the  
problems of the week. Ed Earl is seated at the counter  
drinking a beer with his back towards the others. Dulcie  
Mae is listening and watching Ed Earl as the others discuss  
the situation.

MAYOR

Well, I don't know what to do  
anymore. It seems folks got  
nothing to talk about but this  
Chicken Ranch mess. It's like a  
broken record: Chicken Ranch --  
Chicken Ranch -- Chicken Ranch --  
Chicken Ranch!

C.J.

This bad publicity's flat ruining  
business.

MAYOR

I haven't sold a car all week.

CONTINUED

MANSEL

It's ruining the town. No one's blaming you, Ed Earl. It ain't your fault. But we can't just sit around waiting to grow tits.

EDSEL

The way I see it, the Chicken Ranch served a purpose once, but everything's opened up today. Why, we've undergone a worldwide sexual revolution. Miss Mona's place is not obscene. It's just obsolete.

C.J.

She ain't got a handful of supporters left, Ed Earl. All this publicity is making folks think twice about signing that petition to keep her open.

MANSEL

Why the hell don't that station in Houston turn their cameras to the cesspool in their own backyard.

EDSEL

Or Austin. Within two blocks of the Capitol building you can get anything done to you for money that you can get in Tangiers! Tongue baths, naked massages, somebody ticklin' your ass with a feather.

C.J.

If you know that for a fact, Mr. Newspaper Editor, it's your duty to expose it.

EDSEL

C.J., I don't give a damn if folks occasionally want their asses tickled with feathers. I'd kinda like to think that's what heaven's all about.

Ed Earl finishes his beer and slams it down. He turns around and faces them.

ED EARL

Boys! I got myself a pretty good bullshit detector. And after

CONTINUED

173

CONTINUED - 2

173

ED EARL (Cont'd)

listening to you I can damn sure  
tell when somebody's peeing on my  
boots and telling me it's a  
rainstorm.

He gets up and puts on his hat.

ED EARL

This thing has gotten way out of  
hand. I don't know how. It just  
sort of ate me up before I knew it  
was hungry. But I do know there is  
one thing I can still do.

MAYOR

Close it down.

ED EARL

Nope. I'm going up to Austin and  
see the Governor. Someone's got to  
give him Miss Mona's side of this  
situation. He sure as hell ain't  
going to hear it from anyone in  
this room.

MAYOR

But you can't go up to see the  
Governor.

C.J.

He doesn't see anybody.

ED EARL

He'll see me.

He opens the door and steps outside. Dulcie Mae follows.

174

EXT. DULCIE MAE'S CAFE - NIGHT

174

It is chilly. Ed Earl is buttoning up his jacket.

ED EARL

I feel like a country dog in the  
city. If I stand still, they screw  
me. If I run, they bite me in the  
ass.

She smiles in spite of herself.

DULCIE MAE

I wish there was something I could  
do.

CONTINUED



174 CONTINUED

174

ED EARL

Thanks...They all want me to close  
her down. Have her leave town.  
But how can I tell her to leave  
when all I want her to do is stay.

He smiles at her sadly and walks across the street to his  
car. She knows that's the first protestation of love he's  
ever made. She has tears in her eyes.

175 INT. DULCIE MAE'S CAFE - NIGHT

175

The men are still discussing Ed Earl's plan.

MAYOR

Ed Earl's a damn fool. Driving up  
to Austin to see the Governor.  
Don't he know that's hopeless.

EDSEL

Oh, he knows it's hopeless.

C.J.

Then why is he going?

EDSEL

Because that's what being a Texan  
is all about.

176 EXT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - DAY

176

A group of reporters is standing outside the Governor's  
house waiting for him to appear. An AIDE comes out and  
addresses them like a herald.

AIDE

Ladies and gentlemen. His  
Excellency, the Governor of  
Texaaaassss!

The Aide and entourage clap wildly as the Governor steps out  
the front door to accept the reception. It is the little  
man that we have seen earlier. The Governor beams, waves  
his cowboy hat and quiets the fanfare as if he were facing  
twelve thousand instead of a dozen.

GOVERNOR

Mah frens, I want to thank you for  
that sincere and heartwarming  
ovation.

CONTINUED

176

CONTINUED

176

He walks with his phalanx of aides past the reporters who clamor and call for his attention.

FEMALE REPORTER #1  
Governor, what do you think of the explosive situation in the Middle East?

GOVERNOR  
I was saying just this morning, at the weekly prayer breakfast in this historic Capitol, that it behooves both the Jews and the A-rabs to settle their differences in a Christian manner.

The Governor's Aide and other flaks applaud as the Governor moves towards his limousine waiting at the bottom of the steps.

MALE REPORTER #1  
Governor, Governor, sir. Have you seen the evidence of the disgraceful situation at the Chicken Ranch?

177

EXT: GOVERNOR'S MANSION - CURBSIDE - DAY

177

The Governor stops at the bottom of the steps. He turns to face the reporters and clears his throat.

GOVERNOR  
(singing)  
Fellow Texans  
I am proudly  
Standing here to humbly say  
I assure you  
And I mean it  
Now who says I don't speak  
Out as plain as day?  
And fellow Texans  
I'm for progress  
And the flag, long may it fly.

I'm a poor boy  
Come to greatness  
So it follows that I cannot tell  
A lie!

He hops into his car and drives off.

CONTINUED

177

CONTINUED

MALE REPORTER #2

What the hell did he say?

FEMALE REPORTER #1

I don't know.

MALE REPORTER #1

Same as usual...all hat and no  
cattle.

We pan with the Governor's limo as it takes the short ride  
across the park to the Capitol.

178

INT. LIMOUSINE - DAY

The Governor is very pleased with himself. He sits in the  
backseat and his feet tap out a rhythm on the car floor.

GOVERNOR

(singing)

Oooo! I love to  
Dance the little  
Sidestep  
Now they see me,  
Now they don't  
I've come and gone...  
And ooooooo!  
I love to sweep around  
A widestep  
Cut a little  
Swath and lead  
The people on.

179

EXT. STATE CAPITOL STEPS - DAY

As the limousine drives up and the Governor steps out,  
another group of reporters is waiting for him. He gets out  
of the limousine and walks up the steps.

FEMALE REPORTER #2

Governor, Governor, do you plan to  
take action against the Chicken  
Ranch?

The Governor stops and turns to face the crowd.

CONTINUED

177

178

179

179

CONTINUED

179

GOVERNOR

(singing)

Now my good friends  
 It behooves me  
 To be solemn and declare  
 I'm for goodness  
 And for profit  
 And for living clean  
 And saying daily prayer.  
 And now my good friends  
 You can sleep nights  
 I'll continue to stand tall  
 You can trust me  
 For I promise  
 I shall keep a watchful  
 Eye upon you all.

The reporters look bewildered as the Governor disappears  
 into the Capitol.

FEMALE REPORTER #2

Did you get any of that?

MALE REPORTER #3

I hear him talkin', but he don't  
 come in.

180

INT. STATE CAPITOL CORRIDOR - DAY

180

The Governor looks out through the glass doors at the  
 confused reporters and chuckles to himself.

GOVERNOR

(singing)

Oooo! I love to  
 Dance the little  
 Sidestep  
 Now they see me,  
 Now they don't  
 I've come and gone...  
 And ooooooo!  
 I love to sweep around  
 A widestep  
 Cut a little  
 Swath and lead  
 The people on.

Tripping the light fantastic, the Governor shuffles inside.

181

INT. STATE CAPITOL ROTUNDA - DAY

181

The Governor dances into the rotunda where Melvin Thorpe, his camera crew, and a chorus of Dogettes with Texas flags are waiting for him.

MELVIN

Governor, Melvin P. Thorpe.  
Watchdog News. Why has the Chicken Ranch operation been so long ignored?

GOVERNOR

Beg pardon?

MELVIN

Is it true organized crime may be involved?

GOVERNOR

We seem to be having some acoustic problems in here.

MELVIN

And aren't you worried about possible payoffs and bribes?

GOVERNOR

Melvin, I'm sorry....

MELVIN

Enough of this pussyfooting, Governor! Just what are you prepared to do about Miss Mona and the Chicken Ranch?

Melvin looks around. The Governor has disappeared. He looks up. The Governor is standing by the railing of the first floor landing.

182

INT. STATE CAPITOL - FIRST FLOOR LANDING - DAY

182

The Governor smiles at Melvin and begins to sing:

GOVERNOR

(singing)

Now Miss Mona  
I don't know her  
Though I've heard the name,  
Oh yes.  
But of course I've  
No close contact

CONTINUED

182

CONTINUED

182

GOVERNOR (Cont'd)

(singing)

So what she is doing, I can only guess  
 But now Miss Mona  
 She's a blemish  
 On the face of that good town  
 I am taking certain steps here  
 (points to  
 his dancing  
 feet)  
 Someone, somewhere's gonna  
 Have to close her down!

183

INT. STATE CAPITOL - ROTUNDA - DAY

183

The reporters and even Melvin are confused.

FEMALE REPORTER #3

Is that 'yes' or a 'no?'

MALE REPORTER #3

It's the possible maybe.

184

INT. STATE CAPITOL - UPSTAIRS CORRIDOR - DAY

184

The Governor pops like a leprechaun back and forth behind  
 the marble pillars as he dazzles us with his footwork.

GOVERNOR

(singing)  
 Oooo! I love to  
 Dance the little  
 Sidestep  
 Now they see me  
 Now they don't  
 I've come and gone  
 And ooooooo!  
 I love to sweep around  
 A widestep  
 Cut a little  
 Swath and lead  
 The people on.

The Governor dances his final chorus, ending with a big  
 finish that ushers him into his office as the music ends.

185

INT. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE - DAY

185

The Governor leans against the door and with a sigh of  
 satisfaction wipes the sweat from his brow. He goes to his  
 desk as MABEL, a plump and proper lady, bursts in from his  
 outer office.

CONTINUED

MABEL

Governor, I have Sheriff Dodd from Gilbert waiting outside to see you. He's been here since early this morning and is very insistent.

GOVERNOR

Swearing Sheriff Dodd?..The one on television? I can't....

Ed Earl enters and interrupts.

ED EARL

Governor, you've just got to listen to me...I know my coming here is way out of line but before you go closing the Chicken Ranch I want you to know the facts.

GOVERNOR

Well, I haven't made that decision yet. My aides are working....

ED EARL

The Chicken Ranch, Governor, has been in my county since before I was born. Its doors have been open to soldiers and presidents and farmers and even governors who can remember what a great institution it is.

GOVERNOR

No need to bring that up, Sheriff.

ED EARL

I'm not threatening you, Governor. You hold the whiphand. Whatever you say I'm going to do, but think of the people out there. I've known Miss Mona for twelve years and there's no finer woman that you'll ever meet. The town likes her. She never refuses a charity -- the hospital fund, a new swimming pool. Hell, she even bought uniforms for the Little League so they wouldn't have to play in their blue jeans.

CONTINUED

GOVERNOR

Well, I wasn't aware of her civic generosity, but the law is the law.

ED EARL

And sometimes it's got to be changed. Look, I've been fighting crime all my life, but let's not confuse crime with committing a sin. You can't legislate morality. Those girls out there have never caused any trouble. No fights. No dope. No nothing. They're healthy, tax-paying, law-abiding citizens who supply a demand and provide an economic asset to the community.

GOVERNOR

Ed Earl, you ever thought of running for office? You make that whorehouse sound like a damn non-profit recreational facility.

ED EARL

Governor, if the citizens who elected me had found it necessary to close it for any reason, I would do it. If Miss Mona and her girls were jeopardizing the health, wealth or moral scruples of the community, I would do it. If the place had even been just a piddlin' nuisance, an eyesore, or even a fire hazard, I would close it down. But there's nothing! No reason, except the cries of this muckraking sensationalist on television.

Half a dozen aides rush in.

AIDE

Here they are, Governor. What you've been waiting for.

The Governor takes the sheets of paper and scans them. He sighs and looks over to Ed Earl.

CONTINUED



GOVERNOR

I'm sorry, Ed Earl. The Chicken Ranch loses, forty-two to thirty-seven, with twenty-one per cent undecided.

ED EARL

(confused)

What is that?

GOVERNOR

The polls! You can't ask me to go against the polls! This is what the people want.

(to his aides)

Is Melvin still outside? Maybe I can catch the television cameras before they leave.

He runs to the door and flings it open.

ED EARL

But, Governor, that's not what my people want.

The Governor stops in the doorway and turns to Ed Earl.

GOVERNOR

(decidedly)

The show's over, Sheriff. Close it down!

He runs off and his aides follow.

Ed Earl is bitterly disappointed. He turns and exits.

Mabel, the secretary, steps out with him. She has been impressed with his speech.

MABEL

I'm sorry, Sheriff. You're a good speaker. You could run for office here.

CONTINUED

186

CONTINUED

186

Ed Earl puts on his hat.

ED EARL

I was thinking about it, m'am, but  
I'm just a country sheriff. I'll  
never be grown up enough to be in  
politics.

He tips his hat to her and walks outside.

187

INT. STATE CAPITOL ROTUNDA - DAY

187

The Governor has just congratulated Melvin on his victory. A marching band strikes up the song, Melvin is hoisted on his supporters' shoulders and is marched around the rotunda as everybody sings. The flagwaving Dogettes fall in line along with other citizens carrying signs (e.g., "Concerned Citizens for a Whore-Free Society").

CHORUS

(singing)

Melvin Thorpe has done it  
Once again  
He's shown his light  
And now we see  
Melvin Thorpe has gone through  
Thick and thin  
And led us all to victory.

The Governor looks down from the first floor landing and, pleased with his handling of the whole situation, he sings his song in counterpoint with the Dogettes.

GOVERNOR

(singing)

Oooo! I love to  
Dance the little  
Sidestep  
Now they see me  
Now they don't  
I've come and gone  
And ooooooo!  
I love to sweep around  
A widestep  
Cut a little  
Swath and lead  
The people on.

188

INT. STATE CAPITOL STAIRCASE - DAY

188

Ed Earl walks down the steps to the ground floor. He looks over at the rotunda where Melvin is getting ready for a live broadcast. The Dogettes and the band are singing their last celebration chorus.

DOGETTES

Melvin Thorpe has done it  
Once again  
He's shown his light  
And now we see  
Melvin Thorpe has gone through  
Thick and thin  
And led us all....

189

INT. STATE CAPITOL ROTUNDA - DAY

189

Melvin is standing in front of a live camera. He's about to begin speaking when he's tapped on the shoulder. He turns around. It's Ed Earl. The Sheriff, with one hand, pulls off Melvin's wig, grabs him by the collar and with a great right punch, smacks him in the jaw. Melvin goes sailing across the polished marble floor and lands in the middle of the rotunda, spread-eagled over the Lone Star of Texas.

CHORUS

...to victory.

Ed Earl walks up to him, drops the wig on his face, steps over the inert body, and exits out the front doors while an astonished crowd stares in silence.

190

EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - DUSK

190

From the weather vane shaped like a rooster on top of the Chicken Ranch roof we look down at the Sheriff's deputies stationed at the front gate. A few gawkers and tourists with cameras park by the roadside. Deputy Fred walks over to send them away.

191

INT. CHICKEN RANCH PARLOR - DUSK

191

The girls are standing around, bored...some drying their hair, reading, practicing musical instruments or ballet. Ruby Rae comes in and goes to the window.

RUBY RAE

What's going on out there?

DURLA

Nothing much.

CONTINUED

BEATRICE

The Sheriff's deputies have been shooing off the gawkers all day.

RUBY RAE

Well, I wish the Sheriff or the Governor or somebody would make up their mind whether this place is going to be staying open or not. I got to make plans.

BEATRICE

Me too. I got to think about my future.

RUBY RAE

Honey, you're sitting on your future.

DURLA

I suppose we could always go to Vegas.

GINGER

Sugar, I've lost a step. Shreveport's more my speed right now.

ANGEL

Well, at least I'll get to spend this Christmas in Dallas with my kid.

DURLA

Then what.

ANGEL

Then, by God, I'm staying home. Join the straight life.

RUBY RAE

I heard that before.

ANGEL

No, this time I'm gonna make myself like it. Besides, I've quit twice before and they say third time's the charm.

Mona is at her desk going over her books when Shy enters.

SHY

Any word, Miss Mona?

CONTINUED

MONA

No...My, that's a pretty outfit.  
You've blossomed into a real lady,  
Shy.

SHY

Well, I want to be like you,  
Miss Mona. This place is the only  
home I've ever had and them girls  
is the only family.

MONA

I know just how you feel.

The phone rings. Mona stops talking. Shy looks at the  
phone and excuses herself.

SHY

I'll see you later.

She closes the door behind her. Mona picks up the phone.

Ed Earl is standing by the side of his desk. It is  
obviously very difficult for him to be making this call.

Intercut the conversation.

ED EARL

Mona, this is an official call. As  
the Sheriff of Lanville County,  
it's my duty to....

MONA

(interrupts)

Get to the point, Sheriff.

ED EARL

I've got to close you down.

MONA

I see. How long do we have?

ED EARL

Well, it would be better to do it  
as soon as possible.

MONA

I understand.

CONTINUED

193

CONTINUED

193

ED EARL

Look, Mona, about the other night.  
I apologize. I was angry and I  
lost my temper.

MONA

That's all right, Ed Earl. I think  
we both said things we regret.

ED EARL

Is there anything I can do....

MONA

No, thanks. I think you've done  
all you could. I'll tell my girls.

She hangs up.

Ed Earl puts down the phone. He looks around his office,  
picks up his hat, turns out the lights and walks out the  
door.

194

INT. CHICKEN RANCH MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

194

Mona comes down the stairs and walks into the main room  
where the girls are assembled.

MONA

Well, the news has come. I just  
got a call from the Sheriff. We're  
closed down...immediately and  
permanently.

RUBY RAE

Well, Las Vegas here I come.

GINGER

Would you believe I'm going to  
miss this old place. I've gotten  
in the habit of having a permanent  
address.

ELOISE

Damn. I thought when the Sheriff  
went up to Austin to speak to the  
Governor we'd get a reprieve.

CONTINUED

194

CONTINUED

194

MONA

What did you say?

DAWN

Didn't you know about that, Miss Mona?

ELOISE

He drove up last night. The whole town's talking about the way he fought for you. Didn't he tell you that?

MONA

No, he didn't.

There are tears in her eyes. Music creeps in as we:

DISSOLVE TO

195

EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - DAY

195

An air of sadness surrounds the little house.

196

INT. CHICKEN RANCH - UPSTAIRS - DAY

196

The girls are packing their suitcases in their various rooms and getting ready to leave.

BEATRICE

(singing)

Hey, maybe I'll dye my hair  
Maybe I'll move somewhere.

ELOISE

Maybe I'll get a car  
Maybe I'll drive so far  
They'll all lose track.

GINGER

Me, I'll bounce right back.

CAMELLIA

Maybe I'll sleep real late.

DAWN

Maybe I'll lose some weight.

CONTINUED

196 CONTINUED 196

BEGONIA

Maybe I'll clear my junk.

197 INT. CHICKEN RANCH - STAIRS - DAY 197

Durla is walking down the stairs, followed by Mona and the other girls.

DURLA

Maybe I'll just get drunk  
On apple wine.

MONA

Me, I'll be just  
Fine and dandy  
Lord, it's like a  
Hard Candy Christmas  
I'm barely getting through tomorrow  
But still I won't let sorrow  
Bring me way down.

198 INT. CHICKEN RANCH PARLOR - DAY 198

MONA & GIRLS

I'll be  
Fine and dandy  
Lord, it's like a  
Hard Candy Christmas  
I'm barely getting through tomorrow  
But still I won't let sorrow  
Bring me way down.

199 INT. CHICKEN RANCH - MONTAGE - DAY 199

During the bridge, we see a montage of some of the girls saying their farewells: one packs a last Christmas present; one puts a photo of her boyfriend in her suitcase; one looks out the window for the bus and checks her watch; one takes a last look around an empty room and turns off the fan.

200 INT. CHICKEN RANCH KITCHEN - DAY 200

Jewel is packing up some pots and pans.

JEWEL

Hey, maybe I'll learn to sew.

CONTINUED



200

CONTINUED

200

ROSELEE

Maybe I'll just lie low.

TADDY JO

Maybe I'll hit the bars.

LINDA LOU

Maybe I'll count the stars  
Until the dawn.

201

INT. CHICKEN RANCH COURTYARD - DAY

201

Four girls are walking across the empty courtyard carrying their suitcases to the main house.

RUBY RAE

Me, I will go on.

ANGEL

Maybe I'll settle down.

ZINNIA

Maybe I'll just leave town.

PETUNIA

Maybe I'll have some fun.

202

EXT. CHICKEN RANCH PORCH - DAY

202

The girls are seated in a tableau around Mona and Jewel waiting for the bus.

SHY

Maybe I'll meet someone  
And make him mine.

MONA

Me, I'll be just  
Fine and dandy  
Lord, it's like a  
Hard candy Christmas  
I'm barely gettin' through tomorrow  
But still I won't let sorrow  
Bring me way down

CONTINUED

202

CONTINUED

202

## MONA AND GIRLS

I'll be  
 Fine and dandy  
 Lord, it's like a  
 Hard candy Christmas  
 I'm barely gettin' through tomorrow  
 But still I won't let sorrow  
 Bring me way down

One girl looks up and sees the bus coming up the road. She looks back at the others. They see it, too.

## MONA AND GIRLS

I'll be  
 Fine and dandy  
 Lord, it's like a  
 Hard candy Christmas  
 I'm barely gettin' through tomorrow  
 But still I won't let sorrow  
 Bring me way down

203

EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - DAY

203

The bus arrives in front of the Chicken Ranch.

## A TRIO OF GIRLS

I'll be fine....

DISSOLVE TO

204

EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - DAY

204

There are now less girls.

## SHY AND GINGER

I'll be fine....

Shy kisses Mona and leaves.

DISSOLVE TO

205

EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - DAY

205

Now only Jewel and Mona are left. Mona waves and says half to herself.

## MONA

Hey, we're gonna all be fine.

206

EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - DAY

206

A long shot of the bus pulling away from the Chicken Ranch with Mona and Jewel standing in the doorway.

EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - DAY

It is a cold winter day. The girls have gone. Jewel is securing the ropes around the jukebox in the U-Haul trailer attached to Miss Mona's car.

Ed Earl drives up in the Sheriff's car. He's in his sheepskin jacket with the collar up. Jewel is happy to see him.

JEWEL

Hey, Sheriff!

ED EARL

Mornin', Jewel.

JEWEL

I'm so pleased to see you. I knew you couldn't let me leave without a sweet good-bye for old Porky.

ED EARL

(smiles)

Good-bye, Jewel.

Ed Earl gives her a hug.

JEWEL

Good-bye, Sheriff. Did you hear that some people are planning to get the Historical Society to put a marker up out here?

ED EARL

This little house has seen some times.

JEWEL

That it has. Oh, it's a bleak day, ain't it. I sure hope you come up to the ranch to visit Miss Mona and me.

ED EARL

Maybe I'll just do that someday. Where is she?

JEWEL

Inside.

ED EARL

I see you're keeping the old juke.

CONTINUED

207

CONTINUED

207

JEWEL

(laughing)

Oh, Sheriff, I wouldn't leave  
without my bell and my box.

Jewel rings the bell and laughs as Ed Earl goes inside.

208

INT. CHICKEN RANCH - DAY

208

Most of the furniture has been removed or stuck off in a corner covered with sheets. Ed Earl walks inside and looks around. The fans on the ceiling have all stopped. He turns as Mona comes down the stairs. They look at each other. They have so much to say it's very difficult to find the words. Mona forces a smile.

MONA

The place looks kinda funny, don't it. Ben Sawtuck bought all the furniture and the fixtures. I left it up to Langston downtown to sell the rest.

ED EARL

Well, I'll tell my boys to keep an eye on the place.

MONA

Thank them for me, will you? Those reporters and sightseers could have gotten out of hand if it weren't for your deputies down there at the gate.

ED EARL

Sure.

MONA

And I want to thank you, Ed Earl, for the protection you gave the girls. You did a fine job in a very difficult situation.

Ed Earl walks over to her. He pauses for a moment.

ED EARL

Mona, I swear to God I don't understand how this whole thing happened. It was all so fast. It just seems like yesterday that we....

CONTINUED

MONA

Ed Earl, the thing to do is put all this behind you. Quick as you can.

ED EARL

I just can't figure it out.

MONA

Look, I made a lotta money, had a few laughs. I danced a bit. Now it's time to pay the fiddler, that's all.

ED EARL

Maybe if I just hadn't cussed on that damn television.

MONA

It's over, Ed Earl. Please!

She bites her lip to stop from crying. She walks to the window and looks out. Ed Earl comes and stands behind her.

ED EARL

Mona, you've known me now for a long time. You know me better than I know myself. You know how difficult it is for me to say this, but, Mona, I love you. I want to marry you.

Mona turns around into his arms.

MONA

Oh, Ed Earl, I've loved you since I was a sixteen-year-old baby and I'll keep on lovin' you 'til they bury me.

They kiss...lovingly and passionately. Mona breaks away.

MONA

But, listen to me, Ed Earl. I've thought about this for a long time now and as much as I would like for it to work, I know deep in my heart it could never be.

ED EARL

Mona, didn't you hear what I said?

She hushes him with her fingers on his lips.

CONTINUED

MONA

I did, my darlin', but it's always going to be the way it is. You'll always be the Sheriff -- and you should be because you're good at your job -- and I'll always be...just what I am. You know it and I know it. It just wouldn't work.

ED EARL

But we can make it work. I don't give a damn what people say, we've got to give it a chance...please. Don't leave.

MONA

(singing)

If I should stay  
I would only be in your way  
And so I'll go and yet I know  
That I'll think of you each step of the way  
And I will always love you  
I will always love you.

Bitter sweet memories  
I guess that's all I'll be taking with me  
Good-bye, oh please don't cry  
'Cause we both know that I'm not what you need  
But I will always love you  
I will always love you.

(talking)

And I hope life will treat you kind  
And I hope that you have all that  
you've ever dreamed of.

ED EARL

I wish you joy, I wish you happiness  
But above all this I wish you love  
I love you, and I will always love you.

Ed Earl turns and exits. Mona begins to sing, but breaks down before the song is finished.

MONA

(singing)

I will always love you  
I will always love you,  
I'll always love you....

Jewel comes up to the front porch and speaks softly to Mona.

CONTINUED

209 CONTINUED

209

JEWEL

Come on, honey. It's time to go.

Mona brushes away her tears and exits by Jewel, who pulls the front door shut.

210 EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - DAY

210

Jewel starts up the car and drives down the road. Mona is sadly sitting beside her.

211 INT. MONA'S CAR - DAY

211

Jewel looks into the rearview mirror and sees the Chicken Ranch receding in the background. She looks over at Mona who is lost in her own thoughts. Jewel looks out ahead and sees something that makes her smile. She glances over at Mona again, then smiles some more.

212 EXT. CHICKEN RANCH FRONT GATE - DAY

212

We pull back from the red light on top of the Sheriff's car and see Ed Earl, with his jacket off and his badge prominently pinned to his shirt, step out of the car and walk around to halt the approaching vehicle.

213 INT. MONA'S CAR - DAY

213

Mona looks forward and sees Ed Earl with his hand raised and a resolute look of authority on his face. Despite her tears, she breaks into a smile.

214 EXT. CHICKEN RANCH - DAY - HELICOPTER SHOT

214

Jewel stops the car and we pull back as Ed Earl walks over to Mona and opens her door. The Narrator begins singing and as we swing around and fly higher we see the little house all closed and shuttered sitting forlornly on top of the hill.

NARRATOR

Oh, the little house lay in a  
Green Texas glade  
Where the trees were as coolin'  
As fresh lemonade  
Soft summer wind  
Had a trace of perfume  
And a fan was turnin'  
In every room.

CONTINUED

## CHORUS

Twenty fans were turnin'  
They were turnin'  
Twenty fans were turnin'  
In every room  
Fevers were a-burnin'  
They were burnin'  
And they had to have  
A way to cool down.

## MONA'S VOICE

It was just a little old bitty  
pissant country place....

FADE TO BLACK

## END CREDITS

The music begins a foot-stompin' reprise of the songs as we flash short cuts of highlights from the film. At the end of the credits, Mona turns to camera.

## MONA

Ya'll come back now, you hear?

THE END



THE BEST LITTLE WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS

SONGS

- |     |                                |                          |
|-----|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1.  | "TWENTY FANS"                  | Narrator, Boys and Girls |
| 2.  | "LITTLE PISSANT COUNTRY PLACE" | Dolly and The Girls      |
| 3.  | "SNEAKIN' AROUND"              | Burt and Dolly           |
| 4.  | "GAMBLE EITHER WAY"            | Dolly                    |
| 5.  | "TEXAS HAS A WHOREHOUSE IN IT" | Melvin and Dogettes      |
| 6.  | "FADED LOVE"                   | Burt and Dolly           |
| 7.  | "AGGIE SONG"                   | Boys and Girls           |
| 8.  | "ED EARL'S BALLAD"             | Burt                     |
| 9.  | "SIDESTEP"                     | Governor                 |
| 10. | "HARD CANDY CHRISTMAS"         | Dolly and The Girls      |
| 11. | "I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU"       | Dolly and Burt           |
| 12. | "TWENTY FANS" REPRISE          | Narrator and The Company |

THE BEST LITTLE WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS

NEW ACT BREAKDOWN

ACT ONE

1. Pre-credit sequence/"TWENTY FANS"/history of whorehouse.
2. Credits and "OVERTURE."
3. Introduce Ed Earl in town.
4. Introduce Mona/"LITTLE BITTY PISSANT COUNTRY PLACE."
5. Mona in town.
6. Ed Earl and Mona together/"SNEAKIN' AROUND."
7. Mayor gives Ed Earl the problem of Melvin. Ed Earl makes three phone calls and leaves for Houston.
8. Mona meets Shy and sings "GAMBLE EITHER WAY."
9. Ed Earl at TV station/meets Melvin/"TEXAS HAS A WHOREHOUSE IN IT."

SONGS

"TWENTY FANS"  
"LITTLE BITTY PISSANT COUNTRY  
PLACE"  
"SNEAKIN' AROUND"  
"GAMBLE EITHER WAY"  
"TEXAS HAS A WHOREHOUSE IN IT"

THE BEST LITTLE WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS

NEW ACT BREAKDOWN

ACT TWO

1. Mona calms Ed Earl at the Chicken Ranch.
2. Ed Earl confronts Melvin in the town square and sends him running.
3. Texas Bar where they sing "FADED LOVE."
4. Lake scene.
5. Mona and Ed Earl see Ed Earl make a fool of himself on TV.
6. Confrontation with the Mayor and others in Ed Earl's office.
7. Mona promises Ed Earl she'll close the Chicken Ranch.
8. Football game.
9. "AGGIE SONG" from locker room to bus on road, ending at Chicken Ranch hoedown.
10. Ed Earl leaves Dulcie Mae's.
11. Deputy sees Melvin drive past the town square.
12. Mona at the Chicken Ranch, everything quiet.
13. Ed Earl at home when Deputy arrives.
14. Chicken Ranch raid.
15. Mona and Ed Earl have big argument in her room.

SONGS

"FADED LOVE"  
"AGGIE SONG"

THE BEST LITTLE WHOREHOUSE IN TEXAS

NEW ACT BREAKDOWN

ACT THREE

1. Ed Earl stays up all night. Sings his "BALLAD."
2. "Walter Cronkite Evening News" does wrap-up on Chicken Ranch.
3. Mona in her room.
4. Town meeting at Dulcie's Cafe/Ed Earl leaves for Austin.
5. Governor sings "SIDESTEP" at the rotunda/meets with Ed Earl/Ed Earl socks Melvin.
6. The girls bored at the Chicken Ranch.
7. Mona in her room gets phone call from Ed Earl in his office.
8. Mona tells the girls the bad news.
9. The girls pack and sing "HARD CANDY CHRISTMAS."
10. The last scene at the Chicken Ranch/Ed Earl and Mona say good-bye with "I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU."
11. Drive away and reprise "TWENTY FANS."

SONGS

"ED EARL'S BALLAD"  
"SIDESTEP"  
"HARD CANDY CHRISTMAS"  
"I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU"  
"TWENTY FANS" REPRISE