

No. 00433

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MELVIN AND HOWARD

by

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MELVIN AND HOWARD

FADE IN

TITLES

- 1 WATERHOLE - STONEWALL PASS, NEVADA 1
The desert between Las Vegas and Tonopah, nothing but sage and greasewood. Sound -- in the distance, a motor. It comes closer then fades, comes closer, fades.
Pan off the waterhole in the direction of the sound. It approaches again, a figure appears in the distance.
- 2 ON THE MOTORCYCLE 2
Only the rider's back, silver-streaked hair. This gaunt figure circles lazily in the moonlight, motorcycle tires rumbling over the alkali. The circles get bigger and now bigger, and as he comes around this time, the moonlight catches his face, aristocratic cheekbones, a stringy beard, a pilot's light windbreaker. This is Howard, age 62, looks over 70.
- 3 ANOTHER ANGLE - HOWARD 3
sweeping under the moon, wider and wider and now he speeds towards the waterhole, giving the Harley full throttle.
- 4 ON THE WATERHOLE 4
A knoll running up to the edge of it.
- 5 ON HOWARD 5
heading straight for the knoll, the chopper kicking up sage and greasewood and alkali behind it. Tremendous speed -- it hits the knoll.
- 6 ON THE MOTORCYCLE 6
Howard flying through the air, his knees clutched around the machine, his eyes wide with joy, laughter ringing through the desert.

CONTINUED

- 6 CONTINUED 6
- The motorcycle clears the waterhole on the leap, Howard snug in the saddle, lands in the mud on the other side, skids, churns, the tires spitting mud, now he rolls out on the desert again.
- 7 ANOTHER ANGLE - HOWARD 7
- sweeping into a figure eight, testing his motor now, picking up speed once more, heading straight for the knoll.
- 8 ON THE KNOLL 8
- The motorcycle invisible, only the sound blasting through the night, louder, louder, and now the motorcycle hits the top of the knoll. A rock, a stone, something, it kicks, it stutters, it flies short.
- 9 ON HOWARD 9
- His face exactly the same as before, exultation at the leap, but there is no motorcycle under him now, only air.
- 10 ANOTHER ANGLE - HOWARD 10
- His momentum carrying him over the water and he lands with a crunch on the other side, his head hits the mud, a flare of blood spurts from his ear.
- 11 HOWARD'S POINT OF VIEW 11
- His eye catching sight of his motorcycle fluttering down, landing with a splash, bubbling as it disappears into the waterhole.
- TITLES OUT
- 12 ON HOWARD 12
- picking himself up, stumbling across the desert, nothing but silence around him, his feet kicking over the alkali. He trips, a bobcat swings past, looks, moves on.
- 13 ANOTHER ANGLE - HOWARD 13
- faltering, falling.

CONTINUED.

13 CONTINUED

13

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

14 HOWARD'S POINT OF VIEW

14

Way in the distance, the headlights of a car.

15 ON HOWARD

15

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

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

The headlights pass on down the Interstate. Darkness.

16 LONG SHOT - A SINGLE HEADLIGHT

16

coming down the Interstate now. Sound -- a man singing. The song is horrible, the voice joyous.

MELVIN (v.o.)

(singing)

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

17 INT. CAR - ON MELVIN DUMMAR

17

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

(X)

MELVIN

(singing)

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

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

18 ON MELVIN

18

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

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

MELVIN

Jeesuz.

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

19 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN

19

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

20 ON MELVIN'S FACE

20

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

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

21 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN

21

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

22 ON MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW

22

The body doesn't move. Limp, dead.

23 ON MELVIN

23

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

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

CONTINUED.

23 CONTINUED

23

MELVIN

Whut?

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

24 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN

24

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

25 MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW

25

Only blackness and silence.

26 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN

26

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

Melvin smiles, nothing from Howard. Melvin smiles again.

MELVIN

Whut's the matter, ol' buddy?

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

MELVIN

Whut are you doin' out here?

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

MELVIN

(peering into
Howard's face)

That ear don't look too good to me.
You want a doctor?

Howard shakes his head.

CONTINUED

26 CONTINUED

26

MELVIN (Cont'd) -

There's a doctor in Beatty. That ain't but a few miles. Want to go to Beatty?

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

MELVIN

We'll go to Beatty. Okay?

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

27 INT. CAR

27

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

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

MELVIN

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

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

HOWARD

It's okay.

MELVIN

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

Melvin pulls over to the side of the road.

28 ON MELVIN

28

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

He fishes out the blanket and pillow.

29 TWO-SHOT - HOWARD AND MELVIN

29

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

Howard regards them.

MELVIN

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

Melvin laughs.

MELVIN

Shit.

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

MELVIN

Well, damn! Damn!

29-A INT. CAR

29-A

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

Melvin reaches his hand under the heater.

MELVIN

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

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

Melvin rummages around in the mess.

MELVIN

I was lookin' for a band-aid.

HOWARD

Keep your eye on the road.

CONTINUED

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29-A CONTINUED

29-A

MELVIN

How's that?

HOWARD

I said keep your eye on the road.

MELVIN

Well, up yours, ol' timer.

HOWARD

What?

MELVIN

I said 'Up yours.'

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

MELVIN

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

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

MELVIN

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

HOWARD

No doctors.

MELVIN

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

HOWARD

No nurses.

MELVIN

You don't like nurses?

HOWARD

No, I don't.

MELVIN

Okay, okay.

They ride in silence.

Howard is heaving now, Melvin watches him closely.

CONTINUED

29-A CONTINUED - 2

29-A

HOWARD
I'm not going to Beatty.

MELVIN
Where are you going?

HOWARD
Where are you going?

MELVIN
Aw, Jeezus.

HOWARD
I'm sorry ---

MELVIN
Don't apologize ---

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

MELVIN
Don't explain!

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

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

(X)

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

HOWARD
I'm sorry.

MELVIN
What?

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

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

CONTINUED

29-A CONTINUED - 3

29-A

HOWARD

No, no stops, please.

MELVIN

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

Howard smiles.

HOWARD

Soft, huh?

CONTINUED

29-A CONTINUED - 4

29-1

MELVIN

Do we stop at Beatty or no?

Howard sighs.

HOWARD

No.

Melvin stomps on the gas.

MELVIN

Vegas, here we come.

They drive for a long while in silence.

30 HOWARD

30

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

HOWARD

You're not a bad driver.

MELVIN

I been driving since I was seven years old.

HOWARD

How'd you reach the pedals?

MELVIN

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

HOWARD

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

MELVIN

How'd you know I lived in a trailer?

HOWARD

Didn't you say so?

MELVIN

They was my three brothers in the trailer with me.

HOWARD

In one trailer?

CONTINUED

30

CONTINUED

30

MELVIN

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

HOWARD

Interesting.

MELVIN

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

(X)

HOWARD

What'd you say your name was?

(X)

MELVIN

Melvin Dummar.

HOWARD

You're kidding me, Melvin.

Melvin smiles, looks over at Howard.

MELVIN

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

HOWARD

Depends on what it is.

MELVIN

I've written a song.

HOWARD

No ---

MELVIN

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

CONTINUED

HOWARD

Oh God.

MELVIN

I sent it to Hollywood Talent Searchers. You know you give them the lyric --- they write you the music -- seventy dollars and worth every penny -- you want to hear it?

HOWARD

No.

MELVIN

Here's how it goes --
(sings)

'Well, he called his elves together
To soup up his old sleigh
So Rudolph and the other reindeer
Could rest on Christmas Day

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

HOWARD

Enough, sir ---

MELVIN

Wait till you hear the talk part
-- a dramatic narration like Red
Sovine --

(speaks)

'Now listen there fat man
Just because you're Santa Claus
That don't give you the right
To come around and making all
that noise
In the middle of the night.
Now I don't care who you are,
fat man
You get those reindeer off my
roof ---'

HOWARD

Please stop ---

MELVIN

What's the matter?

CONTINUED

HOWARD

My ear.

MELVIN

Told you we should have stopped
at Beatty.

HOWARD

It's the sound.

MELVIN

What do you mean, the sound?

HOWARD

Your song.

MELVIN

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

HOWARD

I have an aversion to song.

MELVIN

You never sung in your life?

HOWARD

Not if I could help it.

MELVIN

That's how you got to be an ol'
asshole. Now you come along on
the chorus --

(sings)

'He's got a rocket burnin' mighty
quick

Turnin' souped up Santa's sleigh
He'll come in like a streak of light
And he'll blast off right away...'
You got that?

HOWARD

I don't know.

MELVIN

Now sing along with me. Or you
gonna walk to Vegas.

(sings)

'He's got a rocket burnin' mighty
quick'

Motions to Howard to join in.

CONTINUED

HOWARD

(mumbling; gingerly
singing)

'Turnin' souped up Santa's sleigh'

MELVIN

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

Howard starts to sing.

HOWARD

(singing)

'He's got a rocket burnin' mighty
quick

Turnin' souped up Santa's sleigh....'

MELVIN

(speaking)

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

Melvin points to Howard and Howard joins in.

HOWARD AND MELVIN

(singing)

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

Howard seems pleased with himself.

MELVIN

You done it! And you want to know
something?

HOWARD

What?

MELVIN

You weren't bad.

HOWARD

Come on.

MELVIN

Now you sing me one of your
songs ---

HOWARD

I don't know any songs ---

CONTINUED

MELVIN

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

HOWARD

I don't know any songs. My father
was the singer in the family.

'When The Sunset Turns The Ocean's
Blue To Gold,' 'Bill Bailey.'

(imitates)

'Sonny, you do the verse, I'll
take the chorus.' And off he'd
go.

MELVIN

What songs do you know?

HOWARD

Me? Nothing --

(shrugs)

'Bye Bye Blackbird.'

MELVIN

There you go!

Melvin punches Howard in the arm.

MELVIN

Lay it on me, ol' timer.

HOWARD

Don't be crazy.

MELVIN

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

Howard looks at him.

HOWARD

Let me out.

Melvin winks.

CONTINUED

MELVIN

Come on.

Howard starts to hum a little.

MELVIN

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

HOWARD

'Bye, Bye, Blackbird.'

MELVIN

There she goes.

HOWARD

(starting to sing faintly)

'Pack up all my cares and woes
Here I go
Singing low'

HOWARD AND MELVIN

(singing)

'Bye, bye, blackbird!'

Howard is gaining strength.

HOWARD

(singing)

'Where somebody waits for me
Sugar's sweet
So is she'

HOWARD AND MELVIN

(singing)

'Bye, bye, blackbird!'

Melvin turns to Howard, presenting him like an emcee.

HOWARD

(singing)

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

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

MELVIN

(singing)

'Blackbird!'

HOWARD AND MELVIN

(singing
together)

'Blackbird
Bye! Bye!'

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

MELVIN

Hey!

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

MELVIN

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

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

Melvin looks over to him.

MELVIN

How're you doin?'

HOWARD

I'm fine.

(after a moment)

So where are you going now?

MELVIN

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

(X)

HOWARD

What do you do in Gabbs?

(X)

MELVIN

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

HOWARD

I know, I know ---

MELVIN

You know what?

HOWARD

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

CONTINUED

Melvin looks at him.

MELVIN

Well that's more than most people know.

HOWARD

Thank you.

MELVIN

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

HOWARD

Still I appreciate it.

Silence.

MELVIN

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

HOWARD

What a shame.

MELVIN

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

HOWARD

And what happened?

MELVIN

Nuthin.'

HOWARD

What a shame.

MELVIN

You keep saying 'what a shame' ---

HOWARD

I might have done something.

CONTINUED

30

CONTINUED - 9

30

MELVIN

Done what?

HOWARD

I'm Howard Hughes.

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

MELVIN

How's that?

HOWARD

I said I'm Howard Hughes.

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

MELVIN

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

HOWARD

I appreciate that.

31

MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW

31

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

32

ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW

32

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

MELVIN

(breathing in)

Greasewood.

HOWARD

(breathing in)

Sage.

MELVIN

Nothing like the smell of the desert after the rain.

CONTINUED

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32 CONTINUED 32

HOWARD
Greasewood and sage.

They roll along for a while.

33 HOWARD AND MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW 33

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

34 OMITTED 34

35 MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW 35

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

MELVIN
Can I let you off at the Salvation Army?

HOWARD
No thanks. What are you going to do?

MELVIN
We'll keep pluggin'.

36 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN AND HOWARD 36

HOWARD
Let me off at The Sands.

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

HOWARD
Over there.

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

HOWARD
Stop ---

MELVIN
Right here?

HOWARD
This is the place.

CONTINUED

36 CONTINUED

36

Melvin stops, looks over at Howard.

MELVIN

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

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

HOWARD

How do you get out of this thing?

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

MELVIN

Well I enjoyed it, ol' buddy.

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

Suddenly ---

HOWARD

You got any money?

Melvin sighs, reaches in his pocket, fumbles.

37 CLOSEUP- HOWARD

37

waiting, watching.

38 ON MELVIN

38

fishing in his pocket.

MELVIN

Ain't got but a quarter change ---

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

Howard gets out now, shuts the door.

HOWARD

Thank you, Melvin.

And he is gone.

- 39 EXT. GABBS, NEVADA - BEFORE SUNRISE 39
The middle of nowhere. In the distance, dense, white chemical smoke curling up off the ridge where a magnesium plant hovers. (X) Down below, almost a mile away, the town, rutted dirt streets lined with trailers.
- 40 ON THE PLANT 40
The whistle blows. A handful of workers emerges, climb into their battered cars. Graveyard moving out, day moving in.
- 41 ON MELVIN 41
driving down a baked-clay side street, dirty dogs clearing out of the way. A battered Airstream trailer lies ahead on the right. Pulling into the yard, grassless and sandy, a plastic pool caked with mud. A pull toy straddling an old clothes wringer. A clothesline, a child's snowsuit pinned to it.
- 42 ON MELVIN 42
climbing out of the car, picking his way to the door of the trailer, past a new Honda leaning against the air drums.
- 43 INT. MELVIN'S TRAILER 43
A dinette set fighting for space with a child's bicycle and toys. A new TV, a dishrag from the evening meal draped over it.
Melvin moves to a partition, a blanket strung on a piece of twine.
MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW
Darcy, a nymphet 10 years old, sound asleep. He bends to kiss her, tucks the blanket around her. She smiles. Melvin adjusts the heater, then moves off, pulling the partition closed.
- 44 ON LYNDA 44
in her middle twenties, hunched sexy shoulders of an ex-cheerleader, busky and redolent with sleep now. Melvin peels off his clothes, they drop at his ankles as he climbs into bed.

ON MELVIN AND LYNDA

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

45

LATER

45

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

Another car door opens, shuts.

ON LYNDA

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

46

LYNDA'S POINT OF VIEW

46

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

ON MELVIN'S MOTORCYCLE

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

47

ON LYNDA

47

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

48

LINDA'S POINT OF VIEW

48

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

49 CLOSEUP - LYNDA 49

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

Lynda reaches for the telephone.

50 ROAD TO GABBS - DAWN - A PICKUP 50

jaunting down the road. At the wheel in a straw cowboy's hat, Clark Halsted. Stashed in a rack behind him, like a shotgun, his guitar.

51 MELVIN'S TRAILER - LYNDA 51

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

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

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

52 ON LYNDA 52

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

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

53 ON LYNDA AND MELVIN 53

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

LYNDA
Good-bye, Melvin.

She leaves.

54 ON MELVIN 54

He blinks, sits up.

CONTINUED

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54 CONTINUED 54

MELVIN

Hunh?

MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW

The partition pulled, Darcy's bed empty.

55 ON MELVIN 55

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

56 MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW 56

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

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

57 CLOSEUP - MELVIN 57

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

58 and OMITTED 58

59 and 59

60 BAGGING ROOM - BASIC MANUFACTURING - GABBS, NEVADA 60

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

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

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

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

61 INT. WEIGH-SHACK 61

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

CONTINUED

61 CONTINUED

61

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

MELVIN

Your coffee's on.

LITTLE RED

I always leave it on.

MELVIN

How long's it been on?

LITTLE RED

What's the date today?

MELVIN

Twenty-fourth, twenty-fifth ---

LITTLE RED

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

Little Red looks at Melvin.

LITTLE RED

You can't go on like this, Mel.

MELVIN

Like what?

LITTLE RED

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

MELVIN

You told me.

LITTLE RED

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

MELVIN

See your wife?

LITTLE RED

I got a sister.

CONTINUED

61

CONTINUED - 2

MELVIN

You got a sister?

61

Little Red reaches for a coffee cup.

MELVIN

She short like you with red hair?

LITTLE RED

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

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

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

LITTLE RED

What do you say, Melvin?

Melvin sighs, looking at the hole in the floor.

MELVIN

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

62

GABBS HIGHWAY

62

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

LITTLE RED

Here you go, Mel.

MELVIN

Put that stuff away.

LITTLE RED

You sure are good, Mel.

63

ON LITTLE RED

63

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

64 ANOTHER ANGLE

64

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

LITTLE RED
What happened?

MELVIN
You dropped your cigarette!

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

MELVIN
You little red asshole!

Melvin whips off his jacket, starts beating away at the smoking seat. Little Red is running around outside of the car, cooling himself. Finally, Melvin who is making no headway, rips the whole seat out from its slides, throws it in the road.

MELVIN
Now you drive. And stay awake!

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

65 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN

65

The car is stopped. Melvin coughs, wakes up.

66 MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW

66

Little Red is gone.

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

MELVIN
Oh, no.

67 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN

67

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

A Voice booms out over the desert.

CONTINUED

VOICE

Yes?

MELVIN

You got a little red-haired guy in there?

VOICE

Name?

MELVIN

Little Red.

VOICE

Just a minute.

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

VOICE

He's here.

Melvin jiggles the gate again.

VOICE

What do you want?

MELVIN

Him.

VOICE

Are you a customer?

MELVIN

No, sir, I'm not.

VOICE

'Ma'am' ---

MELVIN

No, ma'am, I'm not.

VOICE

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

MELVIN

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

VOICE

Hold on.

CONTINUED

67 CONTINUED - 2

67

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

VOICE

Sorry ---

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

No key.

68 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN

68

climbing slowly out of the car, jiggling the gate again.

VOICE

What do you want?

MELVIN

I'd like to get laid.

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

69 INT. TRAILER

69

MADAM

Welcome to the Cottontail Ranch.

MELVIN

Thank you, ma'am.

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

MADAM

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

Melvin starts down the hall.

MADAM

Just a minute ---

Melvin keeps walking, the security man blocks his path.

MADAM

It'll cost you twenty-two fifty.

CONTINUED

MELVIN

You're kidding.

The security man moves a step closer.

MELVIN

I got a problem ---

MADAM

What's your problem?

MELVIN

I don't have twenty-two fifty.

MADAM

What have you got?

MELVIN

I got shit. My wife's left me, so's my little girl, I almost got burned up in a car, and now my best buddy's crapped out in a cathouse in the middle of the desert!

After a moment.

MADAM

I see.

MELVIN

Let me get my buddy.

MADAM

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

MELVIN

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

MADAM

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

Melvin looks at his watch.

MELVIN

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

CONTINUED

69

CONTINUED - 2

69

She takes the watch from him.

MELVIN

You get the phases of the moon ---

MADAM

Our girls know the phases of the moon ---

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

MELVIN

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

MADAM

What am I going to do with a tire?

MELVIN

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

The security man smiles.

MELVIN

(to the Madam)
Help me, lady.

She drums her fingers.

MADAM

Go get your friend.

69-A INT. TRAILER CORRIDOR - LATE AFTERNOON

69-A

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

69-B INT. TRAILER ROOM #4 - LATE AFTERNOON

69-B

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

CONTINUED

69-B CONTINUED

69-B

TINA

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

Melvin looks down at Little Red.

MELVIN

Give me a hand here.

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

MELVIN

You married, Tina?

TINA

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

MELVIN

Lord.

Tina is struggling with Little Red's pants.

TINA

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

(X)

Melvin sighs.

MELVIN

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

Tina shakes Melvin's hand. Their eyes meet.

TINA

You married, Melvin?

Melvin beams, looks down at Red, dressed all lop-sidedly, still sound asleep.

MELVIN

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

CONTINUED

69-B CONTINUED - 2

69-B

TINA

In the hallway. No one will know
the difference.

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

MELVIN

There's only one problem.

TINA

What's that?

MELVIN

I haven't got twenty-two fifty.

TINA

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

70 INT. MOTEL ROOM - RENO

70

A shattering of glass, the slam of a door, Lynda lies in the
shards of a glass coffee table as Darcy creeps out of the
bathroom where she has been hiding.

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

LYNDA

Musicians stink.

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

They just lie there.

DARCY

It's my fault.

LYNDA

What are you talking about?

DARCY

He didn't want a kid around.

LYNDA

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

(X)

CONTINUED

DARCY

Didn't Joe Goucher say that?

After a moment.

LYNDA

Yeah.

DARCY

What did Joe Goucher play?

LYNDA

Bass.

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

DARCY

How're we gonna pay for this?

LYNDA

With a job.

DARCY

What job?

LYNDA

I don't know -- a job.

DARCY

At the donut shop.

LYNDA

Maybe not a donut shop again.
(smiles)

Maybe a donut shop.

DARCY

It doesn't matter, Ma.

Lynda sighs.

LYNDA

Or cocktail waitress ---

DARCY

I'll have to help you.

LYNDA

What are you talking about?

CONTINUED

DARCY

Don't you remember? Last time you flunked. You thought a Moscow Mule was a King Alfonse and a King Alfonse was a Moscow Mule? And then you had the fight with the bartender?

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

LYNDA

I remember.

DARCY

I think I want to go home.

Silence.

LYNDA

I can't go home, honey.

DARCY

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

Lynda looks at her.

LYNDA

You miss school?

DARCY

I miss my friends.

LYNDA

And Daddy?

After a moment.

DARCY

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

LYNDA

Me, too ---

DARCY

(jumping up)
Good!

CONTINUED

70 CONTINUED - 3

70

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

DARCY
Don't swear, Mama.

LYNDA
I'm sorry.

She touches Darcy.

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

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

71 INT. BUS TERMINAL - RENO

71

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

72 LYNDA'S POINT OF VIEW

72

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

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

73 ANOTHER ANGLE - LUNCH COUNTER

73

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

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

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

CONTINUED

73

CONTINUED

73

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

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

COUNTERMAN

Now how about something to drink?

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

LYNDA

Give us a Milky Way.

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

74

BUS BAYS - RENO BUS STATION

74

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

75

ON DARCY

75

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

She flashes the "okay" sign.

76

ON LYNDA

76

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

And then all of a sudden it disappears.

77

ON LYNDA

77

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

- 78 LYNDA'S POINT OF VIEW 78
A typical Nevada saloon, a mish-mash of gambling machines, poker tables, a roulette wheel. Above the circular bar, a stage. A speaker blares country and western. On the stage, four go-go girls dance in tassels and fringes.
They don't move fast. Lynda goes in.
- 78-A GABBS - BUS 78-A
arrives. Darcy gets off -- runs to Melvin. They hug.
- 79 RENO - NIGHT 79
Melvin speeding along in a wreck of a Dodge, barely holding together, a fender fluttering.
- 80 EXT. MOTEL - RENO - NIGHT 80
Melvin exits his car and enters the motel office. (X)
- 81 LYNDA'S MOTEL ROOM 81
Melvin enters, looks into the unmade bed, checks the sheets. Now moves into the bathroom. Spies some false eyelashes on the shelf. Examines them between his fingers.
Now he sits down on the commode. As he does, he sees the fringe and tassels of a go-go costume, lovingly laid out to dry on a towel. He picks it up, holds it away from himself. Now he brings it close, smells it, buries his nose in the tiny swatch of material.
- 82 INT. GO-GO SALOON - RENO 82
Melvin muscling his way through the crowded casino, up to the scattered characters at the bar.
- 83 LYNDA 83
dancing go-go, kind of enjoying it.
- 84 GO-GO DANCER 84
next to Lynda, her name is Lucy. She pokes Lynda's elbow, tries to yell over the noise.
LUCY
A guy's waving at you over there.

CONTINUED

Lynda looks down.

LYNDA

Oh my God, it's Melvin.

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

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

MELVIN

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

A Voice from the crowd.

VOICE

You go home, Melvin.

ANOTHER VOICE

Yeah, go on home, Melvin.

Lynda looks on helplessly.

MELVIN

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

The security men leap on the bar.

MELVIN

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

LYNDA

I won't!

MELVIN

You gotta!

LYNDA

I can't!

MELVIN

Why not?!

LYNDA

I love to dance!

CONTINUED

LUCY

(hugging Lynda)

Oh, Lynda! You make me feel so good.

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

MELVIN

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

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

LYNDA

Oh Jeezus, Melvin.

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

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

LYNDA

He cut up my best Day-Glo.

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

The owner beckons Lynda.

JERRY

How often does this happen, Lynda?

LYNDA

I'm sorry, Jerry.

JERRY

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

LYNDA

I know, I know.

(sighs)

I was quittin' anyway.

CONTINUED

84

CONTINUED - 3

84

She heads for her dressing room.

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

84-1-

Melvin gets in car and drives off.

(X)

84-A EXT. RENO - DAY

84-A

Melvin burning up the road in his battered Dodge with Darcy.

85 CLUB 29 - RENO - NIGHT

85

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

OWNER

Someone here to see you.

Lynda looks up. It is Melvin.

LYNDA

Oh God.

She walks right up to him.

LYNDA

What do you want, Melvin?

MELVIN

No fights, no bickering -- just carrying out the law plain and simple.

(hands her a paper)

Interlocutory decree. She's final in six weeks.

(hands her a ring)

And my wedding ring -- keep yours if you like.

LYNDA

Aw, Melvin.

MELVIN

I'll be seein' you, Lynda.

He stalks off. She unfolds the document.

LYNDA

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

CONTINUED

85 CONTINUED

85

MELVIN

I get custody.

LYNDA

What do you mean, you get custody?

MELVIN

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

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

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

OWNER

Now, wait a minute!

MELVIN

(loosing himself)

I was goin' anyway.

Melvin turns on his heel and walks out.

OWNER

(exasperated)

Hey, look, Lynda ---

LYNDA

Never mind. I quit.

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

86 RENO STREET - NIGHT

86

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

86-A INT. LUCY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

86-A

Lucy picks up Lynda's bag, leads her to a bedroom, turns on
the light. (X)

86-B INT. LUCY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

86-B

Turns on the light. The bedroom is all nice and pristine. (X)

CONTINUED

LYNDA

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

LUCY

Are there any other kind?

LYNDA

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

LUCY

Why?

LYNDA

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

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

LYNDA

So I can stay here as long as I want?

LUCY

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

LYNDA

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

LUCY

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

LYNDA

(interrupting)

Oh, no, I had one of those. I kept dreaming of bunnies drowning.

Lynda climbs under the covers.

LUCY

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

LYNDA

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

CONTINUED

86-B CONTINUED - 2

86-B

LUCY

Melvin knocked you up. That
bastard.

LYNDA

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

LUCY

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

LYNDA

Melvin's left me.

LUCY

What are you going to do now?

LYNDA

Same thing I always do. Go home
to Mother.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

87 LOS ANGELES - FREEWAYS - ESTABLISHING SHOT 87
down the San Diego past Disneyland.

88 BEHIND DISNEYLAND - LYNDA'S MOTHER'S HOUSE 88
A sea of tract houses. Zoom in on one, any one.

89 INT. LYNDA'S MOTHER'S HOUSE 89
Lynda sits on a couch in a pair of pregnant hot pants and a bra watching television.

Lynda is eight months pregnant. Her mother, Mrs. West, sits (X) beside her.

MRS. WEST

You want something cold to drink, Lynda?

LYNDA

No thanks, Ma.

MRS. WEST

I'm going out for a few minutes.

LYNDA

Okay, Ma.

MRS. WEST

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

LYNDA

Nothing's going to happen, Ma.

The door slams.

90 OMITTED 90

91 LYNDA ON THE COUCH 91

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

Now she looks at the phone.

92 GABBS - MELVIN'S TRAILER 92

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

CONTINUED

92 CONTINUED

92

pop up tarts. Bubbling coffee pot. Whirring milkshake
blender. Vegamatic. Darcy is watching "Let's Make a Deal" on
television. Melvin has his eye on it. (X)

(X)

93 ON THE TV

93

MONTE HALL

And here we go with the Big Deal!

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

94 ON MELVIN AND DARCY

94

DARCY

Number 2.

MELVIN

Number 3.

The lady chooses door number three -- she wins. Melvin's
face lights up.

MONTE HALL

'A brand new Pontiac Astra and! --
a trip to Hawaii on United Airlines
-- United, the friendly airline ---'

MELVIN

I told you! I told you!

Melvin claps his hands with delight.

DARCY

Geez ---

MELVIN

Whatsa matter?

DARCY

I'm jealous, Daddy.

MELVIN

Aw no, honey, it's a wonderful
thing -- lookit that -- Hawaii --
the friendly skies -- Pontiac Astra
-- look! -- look how happy she is!
-- aw gee, she's embarrassed --
Monte kissed her ---

The telephone rings.

94 CONTINUED

94

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

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

MELVIN

Hullo?

LYNDA

Hello, Melvin?

MELVIN

Hey, Lynda. How's it going?

LYNDA

How's what going?

MELVIN

I dunno, whatever you got going.

LYNDA

Could Darcy come down and see me?

MELVIN

You pregnant?

LYNDA

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

MELVIN

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

LYNDA

I don't go to bars, Melvin.

MELVIN

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

LYNDA

What are you talking about, Melvin?

CONTINUED

MELVIN

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

LYNDA

I just want to see Darcy.

MELVIN

And then I'm going to kill you.

(after a moment)

I'd rather have you come up.

LYNDA

Where?

MELVIN

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

LYNDA

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

MELVIN

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

LYNDA

Melvin?

MELVIN

Yes, honey?

LYNDA

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

MELVIN

Yeah, what's that?

LYNDA

It's about you.

MELVIN

(smiling)

Hey.

LYNDA

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

CONTINUED

94 CONTINUED - 3

94

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

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

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

MELVIN
How's insurance sound to you?

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

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

LYNDA
You really want to marry me, Melvin?

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

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

LYNDA
I knew you didn't.

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

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

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

He starts to sing over the telephone.

CONTINUED

94 CONTINUED - 4

94

MELVIN

(singing)

'My woman, my woman, my wife ---'

95 EXT. GAS STATION - LAS VEGAS - MELVIN

95

is waiting behind the wheel in Little Red's car.

96 INT. RESTROOM - GAS STATION

96

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

Now she presents herself to Darcy.

LYNDA

How do I look?

DARCY

(worshipful)

Fat. But nice.

97 EXT. GAS STATION - MELVIN

97

drives up, reaches across, swings the door open. Darcy helps Lynda in.

98 EXT. CUPID WEDDING CHAPEL - LAS VEGAS BLVD. - MELVIN

98

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

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

99 INT. CUPID WEDDING CHAPEL

99

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

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

CONTINUED

MELVIN

We're the Dummars.

OWNER

Not yet, you're 'The Dummars.'

MELVIN

Oh yeah, we're the Dummars and we're getting married again.

OWNER

Wonderful! Were you with us the first time? We've had a lot of repeaters -- repeaters are our favorite folks.

MELVIN

No, ma'am.

OWNER

(to Lynda)

Would you like a veil?

Lynda looks over at Melvin.

MELVIN

How much is a veil?

OWNER

Four dollars.

Lynda is motioning "don't."

MELVIN

We'll take a veil.

The Owner hands Lynda a pink veil.

LYNDA

You got a blue one? To go with my suit?

OWNER

I've got white. The second time around the girls like a color.

MELVIN

She'll take white.

OWNER

Now, on the music ---

CONTINUED

99 CONTINUED - 2

99

MELVIN

What have you got?

OWNER

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

LYNDA

'Because.'

MELVIN

'Hawaiin War Chant.'

They look at each other.

LYNDA

'Hawaiian War Chant.'

OWNER

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

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

OWNER

Thirty-nine out of forty. Thank
you.

She hands Melvin a dollar back.

MELVIN

That don't leave us much for break-
fast. I wasn't counting on the
witnesses.

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

OWNER

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

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

DARCY

A bag of rice, please.

CONTINUED

99 CONTINUED - 3

99

OWNER

Well aren't you sweet, honey?

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

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

100 PULPIT - JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

100

JP

'Til death do us part.'

MELVIN

'Til death do us part.'

JP

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

Melvin and Lynda kiss.

LYNDA

This is it, Melvin.

He hugs her tight.

MELVIN

Ooh, you got a fat belly, woman.

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

The old man falters. The wedding party stops.

OLD LADY

What's the matter, George?

(to Lynda
and Melvin)

He gets weak in the heat -- I better
take him home.

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

OWNER

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

101 MONTAGE - MELVIN, LYNDA AND DARCY 101

Melvin and Lynda witnessing a dozen marriages. Kissing their opposites. Darcy scattering bags of rice. Melvin enjoying himself immensely.

102 AT THE CHAPEL DESK - THAT NIGHT 102

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

OWNER

(paying Melvin)

That's 12 couples at ten dollars
each -- 120 dollars --

(looks up)

And may I say you were wonderful!
You're so in love -- it's good for
business. Come back as witnesses
anytime.

(reaches into
her drawer)

And here's some party packets --
five dollars free at Caesar's Palace
-- five dollars free at the Sands --
five dollars free at the Desert Inn
-- Love ya both!

103 MONTAGE - LYNDA, MELVIN AND DARCY 103

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

104 ANOTHER ANGLE - THE DUMMARS 104

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

105
thru OMITTED 105
111 thru
112 INT. ROCKWOOD DAIRY - BELLFLOWER - THE DRIVER'S ROOM 111
(X)
112

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

MELVIN

That's 225, Bonnie.

CONTINUED

112 CONTINUED

112

She counts it.

BONNIE

225 is right.

MELVIN

I tell you I'm going to win that color TV. I'm going to be Driver of the Month.

BONNIE

Well, you're in the lead, Melvin.

(smiles)

And you want to know something?

I'm rooting for you.

She blushes.

MELVIN

You married, Bonnie?

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

BONNIE

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

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

112-A

walks down the hall, enters an inner office. A sign "BILL MATILLA, Assistant Manager."

BILL

Listen, Melvin, I just want to tell you, you been doin' real good!

MELVIN

Why, thank you.

BILL

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

MELVIN

Now, wait a minute ---

CONTINUED

112-A CONTINUED

112-A

BILL

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

MELVIN

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

BILL

You signed the note, Melvin ---

(X)

MELVIN

Didn't you know I was in the lead for the Magnavox 450L with the auto-zoom?

(X)

BILL

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

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

MELVIN

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

(X)

Bill is choking.

BILL

Let go, Melvin.

Melvin doesn't let go.

BILL

Let go, or don't come back tomorrow.

Melvin releases him.

MELVIN

What do you say?!

BILL

You're a good driver, Melvin ---

CONTINUED

mel #00433

61 thru 66

Rev. 12/12/78

112-A CONTINUED - 2

112-A

MELVIN

Driver of the Month! Twenty new
damn accounts!

BILL

I'm sorry about the engine, Melvin
-- but it's your responsibility ---

MELVIN

Am I or am I not?!

CONTINUED

112-A CONTINUED - 2

112-A

Bill waits.

BILL
You'll pay for the engine?

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

BILL
You are.

MELVIN
And do I get the color TV?

After a moment.

BILL
Okay.

Melvin nods.

MELVIN
Deduct your goddamn engine.

113 HOSPITAL - ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA - BABY NURSERY

113

A baby is raised to the window.

114 CLOSEUP - MELVIN

114

registers nothing.

115 LYNDA'S ROOM - LYNDA

115

waiting, looking up at the ceiling. Melvin enters. There is
a long silence.

LYNDA
I'm sorry, Melvin.

MELVIN
He's got them beady eyes and that
slack tongue. Looks just like
Clark Halsted.

LYNDA
He could be yours, Melvin.

CONTINUED

115 CONTINUED

115

MELVIN

Mine!

LYNDA

You remember the morning the car was repossessed?

(X)

MELVIN

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

(X)

Silence.

LYNDA

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

Lynda doesn't move.

MELVIN

Jee-zus!

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

Two nurses appear. One has a stack of photographs.

MELVIN

Yes?

NURSE BURNS

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

MELVIN

I'll bet you do. You married, Miss Crockett?

NURSE BURNS

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

MELVIN

How do you do, Miss Crockett.

LYNDA

No thank you, Miss Burns.

MELVIN

How much?

CONTINUED

115 CONTINUED - 2

115
(X)

NURSE CROCKETT

A hundred and twenty dollars for
five beautiful color prints.

LYNDA

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

MELVIN

Wait a minute -- let me see 'em.

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

(X)

MELVIN

Belly button looks like a corkscrew.

LYNDA

Tell her to go away, Melvin.

Melvin looks some more.

MELVIN

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

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

(X)

MELVIN

Did I ask if you was married,
Miss Burns?

LYNDA

Melvin!

MELVIN

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

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

MELVIN

And my boy's name is Faron Dummar.

Hands her the clipboard.

MISS BURNS

What a good name.

MELVIN

He's a good boy.

CONTINUED

115

CONTINUED - 4

114

Lynda smiles. Miss Burns goes.

LYNDA

Melvin?

MELVIN

Yes, Lynda?

LYNDA

How's Darcy?

MELVIN

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

(X)

LYNDA

Why not?

(X)

MELVIN

Hospital rules.

(X)

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

MISS CROCKETT

Dairy-time!

MELVIN

Gimme that baby and forget them
jokes!

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

Melvin watches tensely. The two nurses leave the room.

(X)

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

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

(X)

116

EXT. CHURCH OF THE LATTER DAY SAINTS - ANAHEIM

116

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

117

INT. CHURCH

117

The church empty, in the choir loft a chorus of sixty singers
rehearsing.

CONTINUED

117 CONTINUED

117

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

118 CLOSEUP - MELVIN

118

singing up a storm.

119 CLOSEUP - BONNIE

119

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

CHIORMASTER

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

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

119-A EXT. CHURCH PARKING LOT - NIGHT

119-A

BONNIE

You have a lovely baritone, Melvin.

MELVIN

Why thank you, Bonnie.

BONNIE

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

MELVIN

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

BONNIE

Are you happy now?

CONTINUED

119-A

CONTINUED

119-A

MELVIN

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

BONNIE

The Church will help you.

MELVIN

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

They arrive at Melvin's truck.

MELVIN

Well, we'll just keep pluggin'.

BONNIE

(radiant)

What a beautiful attitude, Melvin.

120

LYNDA'S MOTHER'S HOUSE - MORNING

120

Melvin staggers in. The TV is switched to "Let's Make A Deal." Mrs. West bustles around. Baby Faron is crying, Darcy is holding him, Lynda sips a drink.

(X)

MELVIN

What are you doing?

LYNDA

Just a little brandy. They
repossessed the car today.

Melvin shrugs.

MELVIN

It's okay.

LYNDA

Sure.

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

Melvin takes off his shirt.

CONTINUED

120 CONTINUED

120

MELVIN

Whaddya got for supper?

LYNDA

Bell peppers.

MELVIN

I hate bell peppers.

LYNDA

I got bell peppers. How was God tonight?

DARCY

Ssh! -- it's the Big Deal.

(X)

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

DARCY

Door number two.

LYNDA

Door number one.

MELVIN

Door number three.

121 TV SET

121

A Contestant dressed as a lady martian is in agony.

CONTESTANT

Door number three.

Door number three revolves, revealing a large boat.

MONTE HALL

-- Chris Craft with depth finder
and ---

Suddenly, Melvin jumps out of his chair.

(X)

122 COFFEE SHOP - BEVERLY BLVD. - HOLLYWOOD

122

Lynda sitting tensely with Melvin through the window the front gate of the ABC studios. A sign sits on the seat beside her.

MELVIN

(reading aloud)

'I'm a Pirate. I Came to Deal Not to Steal.'

(X)

CONTINUED

122 CONTINUED

122

The people in the coffee shop look over.

LYNDA

Ssh, Melvin ---

MELVIN

Keep screaming and waving the sign
in their face. Got it?

LYNDA

I'll never do it.

MELVIN

You'll do it. I got confidence in
you. Now remember, once you're

CONTINUED

122 CONTINUED

122

MELVIN (Cont'd)
on the trading floor, always trade
up. Settle for nothing.

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

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

LYNDA
Baby?

MELVIN
We're in show business now.

123 OUTSIDE ABC

123

Lynda dressed as a pirate woman, hot pants, a halter, a ker-
chief and Melvin's patch.

A Page is speaking to the line of ticket-holders for "Let's
Make a Deal."

PAGE
Now, people, the whole thing is
not to try to call attention to
yourselves.

The writers emerge from a side door, they start down the line.
A hush falls over the gathering.

Past a man dressed as a fisherman with a pole and a hook and
a fish "I'm Good Bait for a Deal." Past a tramp -- "Take
Me From Rags to Riches." As they come up the line, there is
tittering and jostling. Lynda stands docile underneath her
sign, Melvin's hand reaches down the back of her pants, his
fingers grope for a hunk of flesh. Lynda screams.

WRITER
(pointing to Lynda)
You, you come with us.

Now everybody starts screaming.

124 TRADING FLOOR - "LET'S MAKE A DEAL" 124

The TV show in progress.

MONTE HALL

Now Lynda -- do you want to keep
your five-hundred dollars or do
you want to buy what's behind that
curtain where Carol is standing?

Lynda looks at the curtain, then at the money in Monte's
hand.

125 MELVIN - IN THE AUDIENCE 125

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

LYNDA

(tranced)

Okay.

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

ANNOUNCER (v.o.)

The Sonny James Living Room Suite
by Berkline!

The model starts walking around the living room set.

ANNOUNCER (v.o.)

The arms have a saddlebag effect
with tufting in the seats and
backs for deep down comfort. Com-
plete with tables and lamps! It
retails for...\$1,307!

Lynda jumps up and down.

126 MELVIN - IN THE AUDIENCE 126

MELVIN

That's my wife!

127 ON STAGE 127

Another woman standing with Lynda, a black lady in a mortar-
board.

CONTINUED

127 CONTINUED

127

MONTE

Now it's time for The Big Deal!
There are three doors in front
of us.

(to the
black lady)

Eureka, what door do you choose?

Eureka agonizes.

EUREKA

One.

The model revolves the door, a platform jammed with tiles.

ANNOUNCER (v.o.)

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

Monte kisses Eureka and now he turns to Lynda.

MONTE

And Lynda Dummar, what door do
you choose?

128 MELVIN - IN AUDIENCE

128

Melvin is signaling like crazy, raising two fingers, throwing
the two fingers at Lynda.

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

129 MELVIN - IN AUDIENCE

129

flailing and throwing two fingers at Lynda.

MELVIN

Two!! Two!!

Lynda turns to Monte.

LYNDA

Three.

CONTINUED

129 CONTINUED

129

MONTE

Door number three...Carol!

Carol revolves door number three. A piano.

ANNOUNCER (v.o.)

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

MONTE

(to a staggered Lynda)

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

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

MONTE

\$10,000 in cash!

(applause)

That makes the total value of this Big Deal...\$11,700!

(applause)

130 MELVIN - IN AUDIENCE

130

falling off his chair on to a lady dressed like a pillow, with a sign "I'VE COME DOWN FOR A DEAL!"

131 ON STAGE

131

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

MONTE

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

LYNDA

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

132 REAL ESTATE OFFICE - ANAHEIM - MELVIN AND LYNDA
are seated beside scale models of two houses.

132

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

MELVIN
The Landlord!

LYNDA
How much are they again?

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

LYNDA
We'll take the Sentinel.

MELVIN
Now wait a minute, honey ---

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

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

133 THE SENTINEL - ANAHEIM

133

A little house in a development on a quiet street.

134 INT. HOUSE

134

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

It doesn't look as good here.

135 ANOTHER ANGLE - LIVING ROOM - DARCY AND LYNDA

135

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

CONTINUED

135 CONTINUED

135

LYNDA

If we're very, very careful ---

DARCY

Do I get the tap dancing lessons?

LYNDA

I think so.

DARCY

And my Girl Scout uniform?

LYNDA

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

136 DARCY'S POINT OF VIEW

136

looking out the window.

DARCY

Here comes Daddy.

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

137 EXT. HOUSE - LYNDA

137

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

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

MELVIN

Hey, Ortiz! Give us a picture!

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

Now Lynda straightens up.

LYNDA

(suddenly)

Take 'em back, Melvin!

MELVIN

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

(X)

CONTINUED

137 CONTINUED

137

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

MELVIN

We got a lotta horses here, honey.

138 BACKYARD - DUSK - MELVIN

138

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

MELVIN

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

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

MELVIN

Where you goin'?

LYNDA

I'm leaving you, Melvin.

MELVIN

You can't leave me ---

LYNDA

Oh yes I can ---

MELVIN

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

LYNDA

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

MELVIN

It was me got you on the show.

LYNDA

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

CONTINUED

138 CONTINUED

138

MELVIN

You're gettin' nuthin'!

LYNDA

Melvin, you're an asshole ---

MELVIN

Don't call me no asshole ---

LYNDA

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

MELVIN

It's an investment!

(X)

LINDA

Investment??

(X)

Melvin turns to Darcy.

(X)

MELVIN

(to Darcy)

You like this boat, Darcy?

DARCY

I do, Daddy.

MELVIN

You like that car?

DARCY

I love it, Daddy.

LYNDA

Cut it out, Melvin ---

MELVIN

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

(X)

LYNDA

You got me cryin', Melvin.

MELVIN

Don't make fun, Lynda.

CONTINUED

138 CONTINUED -- 2

138

LYNDA

We're poor, Melvin -- poor!

(X)

MELVIN

Lynda, we won the Big Deal.

LYNDA

I won the Big Deal!

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

MELVIN

Lynda -- don't go ---

She puts Faron down, turns back to him.

LYNDA

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

(X)

MELVIN

Now wait a minute ---

LYNDA

Aw, c'est la vie.

(X)

MELVIN

What does that mean?

LYNDA

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

(X)

MELVIN

You don't speak French ---

(X)

LYNDA

I told you it was a dream.

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

DARCY

G'bye, Daddy. Will I see you?

MELVIN

You'll see me, honey.

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

139 INT. HOUSE - SUNSET - MELVIN

139

shuffles through the back door, into the living room of "Let's Make A Deal" furniture. It is well battered now -- he slumps in a chair.

CB RADIO

(from the boat
outside)

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

139-A LOS ANGELES - FREEWAYS - NIGHT

139-A

Zoom in on a milk truck.

139-B ROCKWOOD TRUCK - NIGHT

139-B

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

139-C ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN

139-C

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

139-D SIDE STREET IN POMONA

139-D

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

MRS. WORTH

Is that you, Melvin?

Melvin stops.

MELVIN

Yes, ma'am.

She appears at the doorway in her bathrobe.

MRS. WORTH

I thought it was you.

MELVIN

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

CONTINUED

139-D CONTINUED

139-D

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

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

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

Melvin looks back at his truck.

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

Melvin takes a deep breath.

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

MRS. WORTH
Melva.

MELVIN
Melva.

139-E MELVIN

139-E

He brings her order inside.

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

Melvin smiles.

MELVIN
Yes, ma'am, I do.

She turns around.

MELVIN
I mean Melva.

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

MRS. WORTH
Cream?

CONTINUED

139-E CONTINUED

139-E

MELVIN

Yes, ma'am.

MRS. WORTH

Sugar?

He looks at her, her parted bathrobe.

MELVIN

Four.

She scoops them in. They sit down.

They drink in silence, Mrs. Worth watching Melvin.

MRS. WORTH

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

MELVIN

Suits me fine.

139-F MRS. WORTH

139-F

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

MELVIN

(brightly)

Where's Mr. Worth today?

MRS. WORTH

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

MELVIN

A tough shift, graveyard.

MRS. WORTH

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

MELVIN

Yes, ma'am, I do.

MRS. WORTH

Makes for a long night.

MELVIN

You bet.

CONTINUED

139-F CONTINUED

139-F

MRS. WORTH

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

MELVIN

Yes, I did.

Melvin smiles.

MELVIN

You got any more coffee there, Melva?

MRS. WORTH

Do you want any more coffee, Melvin?

MELVIN

No, Melva, I don't.

MRS. WORTH

So what do you say, Melvin?

MELVIN

You know what I say, Melva?

MRS. WORTH

What?

MELVIN

Let's get to it.

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

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

139-G

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

MRS. WORTH

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

MELVIN

Yes, ma'am!

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

139-H ON MELVIN

138-H

straightening out his mirror -- he blows a kiss to it.

MELVIN

Melva.

Now he reaches his order book.

MELVIN

And a quart of Lo-Fat and a pound
of Nippy Cheddar.

He pops the clutch on the divco.

139-I ON MELVIN - LATER

139-I

hustling into a house with an order. Hustling out.

140 EXT. ROCKWOOD DAIRY - LOCKERS

140

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

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

141 INT. ROCKWOOD DAIRY - BILL MATILLA'S OFFICE - A CHRISTMAS
TREE

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

BILL

After 'Let's Make a Deal,' you paid
us a thousand dollars. Rather, your

CONTINUED

141 CONTINUED

141

BILL (Cont'd)

wife did. You still owed us twenty-four hundred. That's back to thirty-four now ---

MELVIN

No kiddin'?

BILL

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

MELVIN

I told you about that truck!

BILL

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

He passes some papers over to Melvin. Melvin reads them quietly.

MELVIN

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

BILL

It's up to you, Melvin.

Melvin blinks.

MELVIN

I got to get me another job.

BILL

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

Melvin bends his head over the paper.

BILL

Did you sell your boat?

MELVIN

I sold it.

CONTINUED

141 CONTINUED - 2

141

BILL

What about the Cadillac?

MELVIN

They took it.

BILL

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

Bill looks up at the route map behind him.

BILL

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

MELVIN

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

BILL

Get up a little earlier.

MELVIN

I'm up at 2 now ---

BILL

(shakes his head
sincerely)

Tough.

MELVIN

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

BILL

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

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

MELVIN

(sags, tries
to brighten)

'We'll keep plugging.' (X)

142 LA HABRA - TIKI RESTAURANT

142

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

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

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

MELVIN

Lynda?

LYNDA

Hello, Melvin.

MELVIN

How're you doin'?

Lynda is back home in Anaheim with mother.

(X)

LYNDA

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

MELVIN

I was calling about Christmas.

LYNDA

Oh yeah, Christmas.

MELVIN

What does Darcy want?

LYNDA

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

Silence.

MELVIN

How about Faron? I was thinking about an airgun.

LYNDA

Faron's nine months old, Melvin.

(X)

CONTINUED

142 CONTINUED

142

Silence.

MELVIN
Lynda?

LYNDA
Yeah?

MELVIN
You still there?

LYNDA
I'm still here.

Silence. Bill Matilla approaches, waits impatiently as Melvin resumes his conversation.

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

MELVIN
I was hoping you'd say that.

LYNDA
Good-bye, Melvin.

MELVIN
Good-bye, Lynda.

Melvin hangs up slowly, turns to Bill.

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

MELVIN
I'm sorry, Bill, I don't feel like
singing tonight.

BILL
I knew you'd crap out.

MELVIN
Now wait a minute ---

CONTINUED

142 CONTINUED - 2

142

BILL

Never mind, Ralph will whistle
through his belly button.

Bill walks off.

143 OMITTED

143

144 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN

144

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

RALPH

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

MELVIN

New Year's maybe ---

RALPH

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

MELVIN

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

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

GEORGE

Matilla was saying how you was
yellow ---

MELVIN

Did he?

GEORGE

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

MELVIN

What'd he say?

GEORGE

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

There is a sudden fanfare from the band.

145 ANOTHER ANGLE - THE STAGE

145

Bill Matilla at the microphone.

BILL

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

Mevlin stands up.

MELVIN

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

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

BILL

I guess I had it wrong -- take it, Melvin.

Melvin moves out in front of the band.

MELVIN

These Japs here probably don't know 'Six Days On the Road.'

(turns to the band)

You know 'Six Days On the Road?'

(X)

They shake their heads.

MELVIN

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

(X)

He grabs a guitar from a startled Polynesian musician.

MELVIN

(sings)

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

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

CONTINUED

145 CONTINUED

145

MELVIN (Cont'd)

(sings)

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

146 ON THE AUDIENCE

146

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

147 ON MELVIN

147

He looks toward Bill.

MELVIN

(singing)

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

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

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

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

MELVIN

(singing)

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

CONTINUED

147 CONTINUED

147

The place is absolutely quiet now, the people all on his side. Melvin sees Bill Matilla leave. He points at him.

Melvin takes it real slow for a finish.

MELVIN

(singing)

Now I work like a dog trying to
collect my pay

But all my customers say -- can't
you come back some other day

Boy I just know that there's an
easier way

Twenty hours on the road I just know
I'm going to make it home today.

(X)

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

CONTINUED

147 CONTINUED - 2

147

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

She throws her arms around him.

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

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

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

Melvin waits.

BONNIE
So what do you say?

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

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

(X)

MELVIN
You got kids, Bonnie --- ?

(X)

BONNIE
I got two kids ---

MELVIN
Oh my Lord ---

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

Melvin hesitates.

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

CONTINUED

147 CONTINUED - 3

147

MELVIN

Bonnie? A Mormon girl -- swearing?!

BONNIE

Bet your ass!

Melvin looks over at Bill Matilla who is dancing with a Japanese hostess. Melvin shakes his head.

MELVIN

When do we leave?

BONNIE

Tonight.

148 SERVICE STATION - WILLARD, UTAH - DAWN

148

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

(X)

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

149 GAS STATION - LATE AFTERNOON

149

Melvin hustling around the pumps, handling two cars at once, flipping hoods, washing windows, collecting cash.

DRIVER

(smiling)

You're going to get a coronary running around like that.

MELVIN

Better than starving to death!

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

150 INT. MELVIN'S HOUSE

150

A pathetic place, the "Let's Make A Deal" furniture squeezed in on top of the Kimball piano. A television set drones away.

CONTINUED

150

CONTINUED

150

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

BONNIE

(on phone)

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

She hangs up.

BONNIE

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

MELVIN

Well, we'll give him a check.

BONNIE

What check?

MELVIN

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

BONNIE

But our check's no good, Melvin.

MELVIN

Easter weekend. Oughta pump a thousand gallons. Give 'em a check tomorrow, we'll have it covered by Monday.

(back to the TV)

Hey, look at this, ol' Howard Hughes died. That's too bad.

(X)

151

ON THE TV - HUGHES NEWSREEL FOOTAGE

151

NEWSCASTER

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

MELVIN

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

BONNIE

You told me, Melvin.

(X)

CONTINUED

151 CONTINUED

151

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

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

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

BONNIE
 In a minute, honey, in a minute.

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

MELVIN
 Chicken?

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

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

152
 and
 153

OMITTED

152
 and
 153

154 EXT. GAS STATION

154

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

Melvin calls through to the grease rack.

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

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

TERRY
 You going up to the house?

CONTINUED

154 CONTINUED

154

MELVIN

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

TERRY

What class, Melvin?

MELVIN

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

TERRY

Business?

Terry rolls back under the car.

155
thru
159

OMITTED

155
thru
159

160 INT. GAS STATION

160

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

161 EXT. GAS STATION

161

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

VENTURA

Hey!

Terry rolls out.

TERRY

Yeah?

162 CLOSEUP - TERRY

162

looking up.

163 CLOSEUP - VENTURA

163

hesitating, checking out Terry's face.

VENTURA

Where's Melvin?

Terry points towards the office.

164 INT. OFFICE

164

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

VENTURA

Hello.

Melvin swivels around.

MELVIN

Yes sir?

165 CLOSEUP - MELVIN

165

All earnestness, his ready smile.

VENTURA

You got cigarettes?

MELVIN

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

VENTURA

Uh -- Camels.

MELVIN

Camels? We don't get much call for them -- that's a real cigarette. Nowadays they want brown ones or thin ones or long ones, lo-tar, no-tax -- lemme see --

(reaches
into rack)

There you go.

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

VENTURA

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

MELVIN

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

Melvin hands him the change, sits back down to his books.

VENTURA

(watching Melvin)

I heard I could get 6 and 50, takes me over the line, and then head south ---

CONTINUED

165 CONTINUED

165

MELVIN

Sure, you could do that ---

Stays with his book.

VENTURA

(watching Melvin)

But I guess 15's my best bet,

(X)

(X)

A car horn honks outside, Melvin runs out.

VENTURA

So what do you think?

MELVIN

Give me a minute ---

VENTURA

Sure thing ---

Melvin runs to the pumps.

166 AT THE PUMPS - MELVIN

166

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

167 ANOTHER ANGLE

167

Melvin walking back to the office.

168 MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW

168

Sees Ventura leaving the office.

169 INT. GAS STATION

169

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

- 170 CLOSEUP - BOOK 170
Stuck in the binding of the page Melvin is studying, is an envelope.
- 171 CLOSEUP - MELVIN 171
puzzled, looks at the envelope, now looks out the window of the office. Ventura is nowhere in sight.
- 172 CLOSEUP - ENVELOPE 172
In longhand, "Dear Mr. McKay, please see that this will be delivered after my death to Clark County Court House, Las Vegas, Nevada."
Signed "Howard R. Hughes."
- 173 ON MELVIN 173
turning the envelope over. And over.
- 174 INT. LIMOUSINE 174
Ventura jumping in the car.
DRIVER
Where to?
VENTURA
Airport.
The Driver hits the gas and they zoom out on to the Ogden/Salt Lake Interstate. Ventura tosses the pack of cigarettes out the window.
- 175 BONNIE'S POINT OF VIEW 175
Melvin climbing into his tow truck.
MELVIN
(calling up)
See you, honey, I'm off to class.
Mind the store.
- 176 CLOSEUP - MELVIN 176
bent over the wheel of the truck, speeding down the interstate, driving with wild concentration.

- 177 LONG SHOT - TRUCK 177
 pulling off the road onto a knoll which overlooks the marshes leading to the Great Salt Lake. Melvin, a dot in the distance, climbing out of his truck, standing on top of the knoll, slowly raises his hands in the air.
 A scream, paralyzing, explosive, rising up out of Melvin and shattering the countryside.
- 178 EXT. MORMON SQUARE - SALT LAKE CITY 178
 Melvin hurrying past the Temple and the Tabernacle.
- 179 CLOSEUP - MELVIN'S HAND 179
 tucking the envelope under a pile on a desk.
- 180 CLOSEUP - BONNIE 180
 She drops a telephone receiver. Screams.
- 181 EXT. MELVIN'S GAS STATION 181
 A van rolling up to it.
- 182 ON THE DOOR OF THE VAN 182
 Emerging from it, a directional microphone, followed by four TV engineers in suede jackets, with porta-pak equipment, and a shag-hair-cutted newscaster, all heading straight for Bonnie who is bouncing up and down in front of the station.
- 183 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN'S GAS STATION 183
 The place is swarming with TV vans, cars, reporters, mini-cameras.

WALTER CRONKITE (v.o.)

(X)

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

CONTINUED

- 184 EXT. MELVIN'S HOUSE 184
Melvin, unseen, is crouched on the brow of the hill, watching the circus below.
- 185 ON THE HILL - MELVIN 185
circling around behind the crowd.
- 186 OMITTED 186
- 186-A MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW - TV CAMERAS 186-A
closing in on the station, interviewing Bonnie, her eldest child, Sharon.

TERRY

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

SHARON

(with another reporter)

Well, I guess I don't have to sell night crawlers anymore....

- 187 thru 190 OMITTED 187 thru 190
- 191 LIVING ROOM - ABOVE GARAGE 191

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

MELVIN

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

FRED

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

MELVIN

No press conference, Fred, please.

192 HILL BEHIND MELVIN'S GAS STATION 192

A sea of reporters and TV cameras, Ron Brown lecturing them.

FRED

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

(X)

193 MELVIN AND BONNIE 193

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

REPORTER

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

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

A scuffle, then Fred pulls the second plug. (X)

194 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN IN THE PRESS CONFERENCE 194

MELVIN

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

195 ANOTHER ANGLE 195

REPORTER

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

MELVIN

In the dream, there's no hassle.

196 thru 198 OMITTED 196 thru 198

199 INT. MELVIN'S GAS STATION 199

BILL

'He may be getting 156 million

199 CONTINUED

199

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

200 EXT. MELVIN'S GAS STATION

200

Vans pulling away, cars pulling away, reporters vanishing.
Melvin pumping gas again, comes around to collect money from
a Driver.

MELVIN
That'll be four-fifty.

The door opens slightly. The Driver pulls a gun.

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

CONTINUED

200 CONTINUED

20

DRIVER (Cont'd.)

You and me and Howard. But it was
me that give him the quarter!

Melvin slams the door on the Driver's arm, the gun fires and shatters the car window, Melvin wrestles the Driver from the car, pinning him to the ground.

201 ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN

201

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

202 AT HOME - MELVIN AND BONNIE

202

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

BONNIE

(reading)

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

MELVIN

Let's go on to the next.

BONNIE

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

MELVIN

Haven't we heard that one?

BONNIE

'Dear Mr. Dummar --- '

MELVIN

Skip to the end, okay?

BONNIE

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

Melvin yawns.

CONTINUED

202 CONTINUED

20

MELVIN

I think that's enough for tonight,
Bonnie.

He gets up.

BONNIE

Where you going?

MELVIN

To bed.

BONNIE

You're going to bed so early?

MELVIN

I'm opening at six tomorrow.

BONNIE

At six?!

MELVIN

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

BONNIE

By Labor Day, you'll be a million-
aire.

Melvin smiles.

MELVIN

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

203
thru
206

OMITTED

203
thru
206

207

INT. CLARK COUNTY COURTROOM - LAS VEGAS - MELVIN

207

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

208 COURTROOM - SPECTATORS

208

The gallery filled, up front is Melvin's family, sisters, brothers, mother and father. On another bench, Lynda with Faron and Darcy. Beside them, Bonnie with her children. Other spectators, Bill Matilla, Ralph and George from the Rockwood Dairy, Lucy from Reno, Little Red, Mrs. Worth and Tina from the Cottonwood Ranch.

(X)

209 ON THE BENCH

209

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

JUDGE HAYES

Melvin, turn your chair around and face me.

Melvin turns his chair around.

JUDGE HAYES

Are you lying, Melvin?

MELVIN

No, sir.

JUDGE HAYES

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

CONTINUED

209 CONTINUED

209

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

MELVIN
You bet, Your Honor.

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

MELVIN
A man brought it to the station.

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

MELVIN
I do, Your Honor.

JUDGE HAYES
Do you know who wrote the will?

MELVIN
I do not know.

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

MELVIN
No, I did not.

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

MELVIN
No, I don't.

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

JUDGE HAYES
Gentlemen, I've done my best.

210 CORRIDOR - COURT HOUSE

210

Melvin surrounded by his relatives and Bonnie and Lynda and

CONTINUED

210

CONTINUED

210

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

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

LYNDA

You're doin' good.

MELVIN

You think so?

LYNDA

Real good.

Lynda hesitates.

LYNDA

Bob ---

MELVIN

Who's he?

LYNDA

My husband wishes you luck.

MELVIN

Well, you thank him.

The bells rings again. Melvin picks up Faron.

MELVIN

(to Darcy)

You hold on to Faron, honey. Give your mama a rest.

Darcy takes Faron.

LYNDA

What happens now?

MELVIN

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

211

INT. COURTROOM

211

Harold Rhoden, an urbane five-foot seven-inch from Los Angeles, is examining Harold.

RHODEN

How did you open the envelope?

MELVIN

Steamed it open.

RHODEN

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

MELVIN

I was scared.

RHODEN

What were you scared of?

MELVIN

That it might actually be true.

RHODEN

Why was that frightening?

MELVIN

I don't know.

RHODEN

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

MELVIN

Yes.

RHODEN

What were the occasions for this activity?

MELVIN

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

212

LYNDA

212

She smiles at Melvin reassuringly. Syvella raises the sign.

213 ON MELVIN AND RHODEN

213
(X)

RHODEN

Why did you take the will to the church?

(X)

MELVIN

Because I was too afraid to take it anywhere else.

RHODEN

Say that again.

Melvin hesitates.

MELVIN

I thought they would help me.

RHODEN

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

MELVIN

Yes, I do.

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

RHODEN

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

Melvin stands.

RHODEN

Put your hand on it, raise your right hand.

CONTINUED

Melvin raises his hand.

RHODEN

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

MELVIN

I do.

RHODEN

All right, sit down.

Melvin sits.

RHODEN

That's all for now. Mr. Freese?

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

FREESE

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

MELVIN

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

FREESE

Did you come up with an answer?

MELVIN

No, I haven't.

FREESE

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

MELVIN

That is the way it happened.

FREESE

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

MELVIN

Yes, I would.

213 CONTINUED - 2

213

FREESE

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

MELVIN

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

The courtroom erupts, Judge Hayes slams his gavel.

Melvin leans back. Darcy waves. Melvin waves back.

FREESE

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

Melvin looks at Lynda. She waves.

FREESE

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

Freese takes a deep breath.

CONTINUED

213 CONTINUED - 3

211

FREESE

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

Silence.

JUDGE HAYES

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

MELVIN

I would like to say I don't know if the will is a forgery or not. If it is, I didn't do it. And if it isn't --

(shrugs)

I guess it's for real.

FREESE

That's no deal, Melvin.

MELVIN

I know that.

FREESE

And I'm sorry.

MELVIN

Yes, sir.

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

214 DILWORTH'S POINT OF VIEW - MELVIN

214

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

215 MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW - LYNDA

215

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

216 INT. HOTEL - LAS VEGAS

216
(X)

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

Melvin looks up.

ROGER

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

MELVIN

What does that mean?

ROGER

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

(X)

MELVIN

You think so?

ROGER

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

MELVIN

Really?

ROGER

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

MELVIN

No, thanks ---

ROGER

But you can use the cash ---

CONTINUED

MELVIN

You want to get paid?

ROGER

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

MELVIN

Don't worry about me.

Roger sighs.

ROGER

Well, you won, Mel ---

MELVIN

Then what are you so sad about?

ROGER

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

MELVIN

I knew all that the day I found the will.

ROGER

You're kidding.

MELVIN

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

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

MELVIN

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

1f1

#00433

119

216

CONTINUED -- 2

216

The door slams.

ROGER

(bewildered)

'Santa's' what, Melvin?

Melvin has gone.

217

EXT. CLARK COUNTY COURTHOUSE

217

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

MELVIN

Sorry ---

LYNDA

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

MELVIN

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

Lynda looks at the car doubtfully.

MELVIN

Little Red lent it to me for the trip. He went back up with Bonnie in the tow truck.

(to Darcy)

Hop in, kids. There's Lifesavers and comic books back there.

Darcy pushes Faron into the back seat.

MELVIN

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

Darcy takes Faron's shoes off.

MELVIN

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

LYNDA

Don't worry about me, Melvin.

CONTINUED

MELVIN

(smiles)

It's in my blood.

LYNDA

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

MELVIN

You've got my word.

LYNDA

That's what I'm afraid of.

MELVIN

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

Lynda smiles.

LYNDA

You're married, Melvin.

Melvin shrugs.

MELVIN

So are you.

Lynda smiles again.

LYNDA

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

MELVIN

We could make it that way again.

LYNDA

It is now.

Lynda smiles once more.

LYNDA

Give us a kiss.

She kisses him hard. He blushes.

MELVIN

End of the summer?

CONTINUED

217

CONTINUED - 2

217

LYNDA

Maybe.

Now he piles into the car.

LYNDA

(yelling)

G'bye, kids!

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

218

TONOPAH HIGHWAY - LATE AFTERNOON

218

(X)

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

Melvin rests his hand on Darcy's forehead.

219

ON MELVIN THROUGH WINDSHIELD

219

(X)

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

220

ANOTHER ANGLE - MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW

220

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

221

ON MELVIN

221

breathing in the desert after the shower.

MELVIN

Greasewood.

HOWARD

(breathing in)

Sage.

MELVIN

Nothing like the smell of the desert after the rain.

HOWARD

Greasewood and sage.

CONTINUED

221

CONTINUED

221

They roll along for a while.

HOWARD

How about letting me drive?

MELVIN

You?

HOWARD

Just for a little while.

MELVIN

Drive?

HOWARD

I'm a goddamn good driver ---

MELVIN

You haven't driven a car since they put out the last Hudson.

HOWARD

I'm a goddamn good driver. I'll bet you.

222

ON MELVIN

222

He looks at Howard.

223

ON HOWARD

223

waiting.

224

ON MELVIN

224

Smiles, pulls off the road.

MELVIN

When we get to Vegas, I'll run her into town.

Howard hesitates.

MELVIN

Take the wheel, ol' timer.

Howard gets out and Melvin slides over.

225

MELVIN'S POINT OF VIEW

225

Howard looking carefully at the dashboard. Very slowly he puts the car into gear, very slowly he releases the brake, and very slowly he rolls it out onto the road.

226

ON MELVIN AND HOWARD

226

Melvin watching as Howard drives. Howard watching Melvin watching him. Now Melvin's head begins to nod. His eyes close.

227

ON HOWARD

227

Driving, now he turns, sneaks a look at Melvin who is sound asleep beside him. Gives the car a little gas and begins to sing.

HOWARD

(singing) quietly)

'Make my bed
And light the light
I'll arrive
Late tonight
Blackbird!
Blackbird!
Bye! Bye!'

Howard props his arm out the window, adjusts the mirror, now he gives the car more gas.

He is very happy.

228

MELVIN'S CAR

228

rolling down the highway to Las Vegas. From it ----

HOWARD (v.o.)

(singing)

'Pack up all my cares and woes
Singin' low
Here I go
Bye bye blackbird....'

The car becomes a dot. It never disappears, nor does the music end.

FADE OUT

THE END