

"BURNING LOVE"

A Screenplay By

Christopher J. Musser

and

Burton J. Tschache

Script No. \_\_\_\_\_

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First Draft

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FADE IN:

INT. CONVERTED BEDROOM/ELVIS SHRINE - DAY

The CAMERA DOLLYS into a succession of ELVIS mementos, including: a copy of ELVIS' first-grade REPORT CARD, a TAPESTRY of ELVIS SCENES on a PERSIAN RUG, a PHOTOGRAPH of FOUR FRIENDS in front of a building with a sign that reads, 'SUN RECORDS,' and a FRAMED, 8 X 10 PHOTOGRAPH of ELVIS, signed "To Jerry from Elvis."

A classic ELVIS SONG blares from the beautifully restored WURLITZER JUKEBOX as The CAMERA continues past a row of ELVIS porcelain DECANTERS and down to an ELVIS LAMP, consisting of a STATUE of ELVIS, strumming a porcelain GUITAR. A hand comes into the FRAME and turns on the RED LAMP.

The hand belongs to JEROME HALVERSON, (JERRY), a 45-year-old, dark-haired, slightly overweight, AUTO INSURANCE ADJUSTER, who looks fairly ordinary, except for his SIDEBURNS, which are about an INCH too long.

JERRY (record ends)

Man, that says it, that really says it.

KEN

Yeah, you're right. There's no one  
like the King.

KEN is muscular, 45, has a small scar on his face that he got in VIET NAM, is a childhood buddy of JERRY'S, and his best friend.

One of the other men in the room, GEORGE, raises his shot of WHISKEY in a TOAST. GEORGE is 45, big and healthy, with dark curly hair. A former GUARD on the WILLIAM TAFT HIGH SCHOOL CHAMPIONSHIP FOOTBALL TEAM, with JERRY and KEN, he graduated in 1963 with them. GEORGE is a local MORTICIAN, and one of JERRY'S INNER CIRCLE of FRIENDS. He faces JERRY.

GEORGE

Happy birthday, and many happy returns,  
to a man among men, one of the inspir-  
ations of my life . . .

JERRY smiles and looks down at his feet.

GEORGE (cont.)

. . . a man who I hold in the highest  
esteem . . .

JERRY shuffles from side to side, turns a bright shade of red, and pulls his COWBOY HAT over his face.

JERRY

Awww . . .

GEORGE

. . . Elvis, the King.

JERRY looks hurt and slides the HAT off of his face.

GEORGE (cont.)

Jerry, happy birthday to you, too.

JERRY feigns insult, but FOUR FRIENDS laugh and clink glasses. DAN, the last member of the INNER CIRCLE, but five years younger, raises his glass again.

DAN

Yeah, the King. And our own Crown  
Prince, Jerry. Jerry and Elvis--Here,  
here!

They clink glasses again, and down their SHOTS. Suddenly the DOOR to the room opens, and a ten-year-old GIRL, COREY, bursts in, and looks over at GEORGE.

COREY

Dad, Danny just got hit in the head  
with a football. His nose is bleeding  
all over everything.

GEORGE

Oh, fu . . . ooey. I'll be right out.

JERRY

There's a first-aid kit in the garage,  
if you need it.

GEORGE

Thanks.

GEORGE follows his DAUGHTER out of the room.

KEN

There's another reason I never had kids.

JERRY

Look what you're missing, Ken, the satisfaction of a well-formed scar, the beauty

of a nosebleed, the reward of seeing another  
mug just like your own.

KEN

Sounds like a hell of an adjustment . . .

He smiles and points at GEORGE going out the door.

KEN (cont.)

. . . even though I can see how happy  
all of you are in your 'familial bliss.'

GEORGE flips KEN 'The Bird,' careful not to let COREY see, and closes  
the door behind him.

KEN (cont. smiling)

But I think love has passed this old fool  
by.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

KEN'S MEMORY: We are at a high school football game 28 years ago.  
We see a barely recognizable version of KEN, who has just scored a  
touchdown and is raising the ball in the air triumphantly. He looks  
over at the stands and sees a pretty, blonde CHEERLEADER jumping up  
and down.

DISSOLVE BACK TO:

INT. ELVIS SHRINE - DAY

The door opens again, and BRENDA, JERRY'S WIFE enters. BRENDA is 44,  
blonde, in WONDERFUL shape, was JERRY'S HIGH SCHOOL SWEETHEART and  
now is the mother of his three children. She runs a successful DRIED  
FLOWER ARRANGING business out of her home. KEN watches BRENDA walk  
by him and kiss JERRY.

BRENDA

Hey, birthday boy, how about firing  
up the bar-b-que so we can get dinner  
going?

JERRY

Sure, hon.

JERRY kisses BRENDA back and turns to the GROUP.

JERRY (cont.)

How about it, guys--hungry? Who's gonna help earn their supper?

KEN

You would have to pick the coldest day of the year to have a bar-b-que.

JERRY

I picked the COLDEST day of the year, because it happens to be my birthday, and Elvis'. Now, stop whining and lend a hand.

KEN walks over behind BRENDA and slaps her on the FANNY.

KEN

How about if I help with the buns?

BRENDA whirls around, as the others laugh, and pulls KEN'S CATERPILLAR HAT hard down over his eyes.

BRENDA

You never were good with buns, Ken, why don't you just scrape the grill?

EVERYONE laughs as KEN struggles to get the CAP off of his face.

DAN

I'll give you a hand, Jer, what do you want me to do?

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

KIDS, WIVES, and IN-LAWS are watching a COLLEGE FOOTBALL GAME on the TV. The door to the ELVIS SHRINE opens and everyone troops out, walking in front of the Television.

JERRY

Who's winning?

UNCLE BOB (looking around him)

LSU, and move your fat ass.

MILDRED, BOB'S WIFE and JERRY'S MOTHER-IN-LAW, elbows BOB.

MILDRED

Bob--the kids!

UNCLE BOB

Sorry. Jerry, I didn't mean to say 'fat.'

KEN

Jerry calls them, 'love handles.'

UNCLE BOB

Then I'd LOVE to have Jerry remove his handles from in front of the TV set.

JERRY (hasn't moved)

Can't take Missouri losing, huh, Bob?

MISSOURI is on L.S.U.'s FIVE yard line and, as everybody watches, scores a touchdown on the very next play, a half-back sweep.

UNCLE BOB

Hooowee!

JERRY

Shit.

AUNT MILDRED

Jerry!

The GANG leaves the room through another door into the GARAGE, where JERRY grabs a bag of CHARCOAL and some LIGHTER FLUID, and they exit to the BACK YARD. In the GARAGE is a beautiful, though partially dismantled, '57 CHEVY.

JERRY (cont.)

Thank God it's not raining.

JERRY dumps the COALS into the BAR-B-QUE and DAN squirts the LIGHTER FLUID on them.

KEN

Remember three years ago when we had two feet of snow and you were out here in snowshoes and a mackinaw?

JERRY (looks at him)

A tradition is a tradition.

DAN

We bar-b-que for all our birthdays. Jerry's just happens to be in the dead of winter.

JERRY

And it'll get a lot warmer if someone can find a match and light the damn coals.

KEN pulls a STICK MATCH from his pocket, feigns STRIKING it on his cheek, then torches the BAR-B-QUE.



KEN

There, I lit the coals. Now, who wants  
a hot-battered rum?

GEORGE comes out of the back door.

GEORGE

I'll take two. (to everyone) Ever  
see a kid try to eat a football?

KEN

Remember '62, when that guy from Sherman  
Oaks tried to catch a pass with his  
ass?

Everyone laughs as they recall the high school game. The CAMERA CLOSES  
on JERRY'S face. He is reminiscing.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL GAME - DAY

JERRY'S MEMORY of the HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL GAME. JERRY, in the  
backfield with KEN, takes a handoff, slashes through the line, and  
runs for a 15 yard touchdown. He looks towards the stands at a pretty  
blonde CHEERLEADER.

DISSOLVE BACK TO:

The BAR-B-QUE.

GEORGE

Yeah, hit him right between the cheeks.

DAN

That play will go down in the annals  
of high school football.

GEORGE

More likely, the analS.

DAN (laughs)

Bring me a toddy, too, Ken.

KEN goes into the house and passes PETER, (PETE), JERRY'S 20-year-old son, coming outside.

PETE

Dad, Missouri won, you owe me and Uncle Bob twenty bucks.

JERRY

I'll take yours off your bill.

PETE

Come on, Dad. Pay up, please. I need gas money.

JERRY shrugs and reaches into his pocket for his BILLFOLD.

JERRY

Here's seven, it's all I got. Get the rest from your mom.

PETE grabs the money and exits.

JERRY (cont.)

My kid, the bum. But God love him, he's my favorite son.

GEORGE

He's your only son, Jer. Say, how about lending me seven bucks? In fact-- let's just call it ten even.

JERRY

You're a little late, Pal. Watch the coals for me.

JERRY walks grumbling into the house passing KEN who is on his way out with the drinks.

KEN

What's with smiley?

KEN hands the drinks around.

DAN

Pete, again.

KEN

You know, he's been kinda' tight ever since his mom died.

DAN

Yeah, he sure has. That's a tough one to deal with, especially with a mom as nice as Molly.

KEN

Yeah, and right out of the blue.

They all pause for a few moments and reflect.

GEORGE

You know, she wouldn't want her only boy to be moping around like that.  
(pause) I guess it's up to us to cheer him up.

DAN

Yeah, but how?

KEN (after a beat)

Let's play a joke on him.

DAN

Right, it's always worked before.

They laugh.

KEN

Oh! I got a great idea. Listen to this--wait 'till you see what I got him for his birthday . . .

The THREE form a HUDDLE as KEN whispers to them.

CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

It is the end of DINNER. The TABLE was set magnificently and is littered with DISHES and desert is being served. JERRY leans back from the table and covers his stomach with both hands which he rubs in a circular motion.

JERRY

Brenda, you outdid yourself . . .

BRENDA

It wasn't me that did the bar-b-cueing.

BRENDA, picking up dishes, leans over and kisses JERRY on the cheek.

UNCLE BOB

Good thing you're a better cook than a judge of character, Jer.

JERRY

Missouri's got the character of a pork rind, Bob.

SHIRLEY, GEORGE'S WIFE, is pleasantly plump and smiles at BRENDA as she helps her pick up dishes.

SHIRLEY

Wonderful dinner, Brenda, wasn't that the potato recipe you gave me?

BRENDA

The very same.

BRENDA winks at SHIRLEY as they carry their dishes into the kitchen.

DAN (grinning)

Think you have it all now, Jer?

JERRY smiles back contentedly, and burps.

JERRY

Yeah, think I must, Dan . . .

PETE

Dad, is it OK if we work on the car tomorrow?

JERRY sits up in his chair just as the FRONT DOOR opens, and a RED MINI-SKIRTED COWGIRL bursts in, carrying a bunch of HAPPY BIRTHDAY BALLOONS. She comes over and kisses JERRY as everyone LAUGHS, then she hands him the BALLOONS and sits on the table in front of him, crossing her legs.

COWGIRL

I hear ya'll are having a birthday, and I'm here to help you celebrate, in the spirit in which it is intended . . .

BRENDA and SHIRLEY exit the KITCHEN, a GIANT BIRTHDAY CAKE in their hands, with 4 1/2 LARGE CANDLES on it.

ALL

Happy birthday to you.  
 Happy birthday to you.  
 Happy birthday dear Jerry.  
 Happy birthday to you.

COWGIRL

Now make a wish, a goood one.

JERRY

You mean I only get five candles?

BRENDA

I didn't want to burn the house down,  
 so I just gave you one for every  
 decade.

UNCLE BOB

Come on Jerry, put some of that wind  
 to good use and blow out the candles,  
 so we can have some of that cake.

FADE TO:

INT. ELVIS SHRINE - NIGHT

The FOUR INNER CIRCLE members are gathered for an after-cake drink,  
 or three. All of them are in their cups, and happily enjoying the  
 winding-down party. KEN hands JERRY a SMALL GIFT BOX.

KEN

Happy birthday, Jerry. Here's a window  
 on the future.

GEORGE (eerily)

Wooooooooo . . .

JERRY unwraps the BOX and finds a certificate inside.

JERRY (reading it)

Who's Wanda the Wise?

KEN

She's a pillar in time: yesterday,  
today, and tomorrow.

DAN and GEORGE are giggling.

JERRY (mystified)

Thanks. Thanks, Ken.

DAN

Well, I guess this is another end  
to another perfect birthday, Jer . . .

JERRY, smiling, suddenly has a BOX in his hands. Everyone looks at  
it as he speaks, slowly.

JERRY

Not quite perfect yet . . .

JERRY, teasing them with the BOX, continues.

JERRY (cont.)

. . . you know, L.S.U. could've won  
today, if they had just lined up their  
secondary a little bit closer . . .

KEN

Open the god-damned box, Jerry, what're  
ya just gonna stand there and flap your  
jaw?

JERRY

Don't interrupt me, I was about to make a point . . .

GEORGE

We know what the point is, you've got a box, you won't tell us what's in it, and we all have to wait for you to open it up to find out what it is.

JERRY

. . . the point I was gonna make, was if Baker had lined up directly opposite Brunwald, he could have cut off that sweep, and Missouri wouldn't have been able . . .

They ALL SMILE knowingly as DAN, his hand on his forehead, says:

DAN (interrupting)

OK, what was your point again?

KEN (shaking his head)

Sheeezzz.

JERRY

. . . Missouri wouldn't have been able to make that last sweep and score. That was it in a nutshell . . . ONE GUY--BAKER.

The other THREE nod their heads and look at JERRY with questioning eyes.

GEORGE

Now, open the box, Jerry . . .

JERRY smiles and reverently and very slowly, unwraps the large, flat cardboard box and lifts the cover to reveal a beautiful, classic, TOURQUOISE SILK SHIRT.



JERRY

Guys, this is what I've been waiting  
all day to show you. I just picked  
up the ultimate Elvis souvenir . . .

JERRY pauses for a reaction, but all eyes are focused on the beautiful,  
sequined SHIRT.

JERRY (cont. reverently)

. . . this is the shirt Elvis wore  
when he bopped Ann-Margret in 'Viva,  
Las Vegas.'

The room goes deathly still as the THREE MEN stare, open-mouthed,  
at the iridescent tourquoise SHIRT.

DAN

Man, oh man--it's beautiful.

GEORGE

It's blinding me.

KEN, also in awe, reaches out and feels the shirt between his thumb  
and forefinger.

KEN

How much this set you back, Jer?

JERRY

About five.

GEORGE

Five . . . ?

JERRY

Five.

DAN

Well, you've really done it this time,  
Jer.

DAN reaches out and JERRY nods, letting him take the shimmering artifact, which DAN smells, and then holds against his chest.

DAN (cont.)

Aaaah . . . Ann-Margret.

KEN

Sheee . . . it. He never bopped Ann-  
Margret.

GEORGE

Hey, he probably bopped 'em all.  
That's the way it is in Hollywood.

JERRY

If I was him, I would've bopped her.

GEORGE (to KEN)

You mean you couldn't tell that by  
the way she looked at him . . .

KEN

What do you mean, the way she looked  
at him?

GEORGE

I mean the WAY she looked at him.

KEN

BULLSHIT. The fact that Elvis did or did not bop Ann-Margret has nothing to do with what I'm trying to tell you.

JERRY

Just what are you trying to tell us?

KEN (pause, being petty)

What I'm trying to tell you is that,  
THAT is not the ultimate Elvis souvenir . . .

JERRY looks wounded, and EVERYONE waits patiently, as KEN struggles to frame his idea.

JERRY (after a long pause)

We're waiting, Ken.

KEN

Elvis . . . himself. You get him, and stuff him, and put him right over there, in the corner.

EVERYONE follows KEN'S finger as he points to a relatively empty corner of the ELVIS SHRINE.

DAN

Come on Ken, all that's left of Elvis is dust.

GEORGE (musing)

Well, his bones and teeth'd still be intact . . .

JERRY

Nawww.

FADE TO:

INT. JERRY AND BRENDA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The party's over and everyone has gone home. BRENDA is wearing a flannel NIGHT SHIRT, as she sits reading a murder mystery on the bed.

JERRY enters the room in a T-SHIRT and BOXER SHORTS that say, "Love Me Tender."

JERRY (cont.)

Thanks, honey, for everything today.  
It was a great party.

BRENDA puts down her paperback.

BRENDA

Glad you liked it. I wanted you to  
be happy.

JERRY

I'm always happy, especially when I'm  
with you.

JERRY kisses her and turns out the LIGHT. We hear rustling sheets for a few moments and the sound of more kisses. The silence is broken by a loud, long "ppffuuuut!"

BRENDA

Phew, Jerry, I thought you were going  
to see a doctor about that.

JERRY

Sorry.

CUT TO:

EXT. - SID'S AUTO BODY AND FENDER - DAY

We see the front of a medium-sized AUTO REPAIR SHOP. JERRY walks into the shop, looks at the ongoing work, and saunters over to the OFFICE, next to the PARTS COUNTER.

JERRY (cont.)

Hey, anybody gonna help me?

JERRY catches the owner's eye. SID is fiftyish, balding, with a pot belly and a gruff demeanor.

SID

You here to cause trouble, or pay me for the '84 Bronco?

JERRY

I paid you all I can on the Bronco. Who estimated that anyway, a twelve-year-old?

SID looks frustrated, turns away and starts to shuffle papers on his desk.

JERRY (cont.)

I lose my ass every day of the week and no one bails me out.

SID

You don't work for the only insurance company in town.

JERRY

Lighten up, will ya? I'll buy you a drink.

SID

I've got work to do.

JERRY'S smile disappears, his shoulders slump, and he looks away from SID. He seems to be talking to someone. Who?

JERRY (softly)

What do you think?

SID

What?

CUT TO:

EXT. RACETRACK - DAY

JERRY and PETE are watching a TRACTOR PULL at the LOCAL SPEEDWAY. It is muddy, and raining slightly, and JERRY has just brought PETE a HOT-DOG and FRIES.

JERRY

There, this sure beats working on the car, doesn't it?

PETE

We'll never get it done this way, Dad.  
(smiles) But you're right.

JERRY

We'll be done--by summer, I promise.  
(after a beat) How's things going at the shop?

PETE looks away and doesn't say anything. A GIANT TRUCK TRAILOR RIG is pulling the DISTANCE, and JERRY and PETE cheer enthusiastically.

PETE

Wow! What a run!

JERRY

Look at the smoke comin' from that baby--I'll bet that's his last pull.

PETE takes a bite of his HOT-DOG and smiles at his DAD.

PETE

How much you think that'll cost him?

JERRY

I wouldn't want to estimate it--you're talking mega-bucks.

PETE stares straight ahead and doesn't say anything.

JERRY (cont. soon)

So, how's it goin'?

PETE

They laid me off Thursday.

JERRY

What!?

JERRY shakes his head from side to side, looking very frustrated, then looks over at his SON, who is quietly eating his HOT-DOG.

JERRY (cont.)

. . . and you weren't gonna tell me?

PETE

Dad, I've got a chance to drive for Bowen.

JERRY

Would you get your head out of your damn ass--that doesn't pay any money!

PETE stares straight ahead, not wanting to meet his DAD'S eyes.

JERRY (cont. after a beat)

I'm sorry, son. You know I want you to

succeed, but that's not a job--that's a dream.

PETE (strongly)

I don't have my head up my ass. And it's my dream, not yours, besides, this is really gonna happen.

Now JERRY stares forward too, neither one of them saying anything.

CUT TO:

EXT. FLOWER MARKET - DAY

BRENDA is at the DRIED-FLOWER BOOTH, talking to KATY, a friend and supplier, and DAN'S WIFE. BRENDA picks up some new flowers.

BRENDA

These are beautiful--they're just perfect.

KATY

And only seventeen dollars a hundred.

BRENDA

Well, I'll take two hundred--and could you give me a ride to aerobics on Wednesday?

KATY

Sure--car break down?

BRENDA

No, regular service, a tuneup. Jerry just tells me when it's time, and I take it in.

KATY

You guys still coming over for cards?



BRENDA

Yeah, and you tell your husband if you guys trounce us again, we'll look for another place to play pinochle.

They laugh.

KATY

How's it having Pete back home?

BRENDA

OK. He's really a good kid, just a little unclear about what he wants.

KATY

Is he still going out with Margie?

BRENDA

Oh, sure. Sometimes I think if he'd settle down, they'd settle down. I think he's got quite a bit of his father in him, though.

KATY

YOU guys got married in high school.

BRENDA

Pete and Margie don't have the compelling reason we did.

The two FRIENDS laugh warmly.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - EVENING

PETE is PICKING up MARGIE, a cute, lovable RED-HEAD, with his fathers

car, at her house. MARGIE is standing on the porch in the rain when PETE pulls up. She runs to the car and gets in.

PETE

Hello to you.

She kisses him and looks at him, and they drive away.

CUT TO:

INT. LIQUOR STORE - EVENING

CLOSE: an ARTICLE about GRACELAND, TENNESSEE, in a FAN MAGAZINE. The CAMERA pulls back to reveal JERRY, reading, while KEN buys BEER in the background. KEN pays for the BEER and passes by JERRY on his way out the door into the rain.

JERRY

Says here Elvis was sighted in New Mexico last week.

KEN

Probably in Timbuktu, too. Let's go home and talk.

JERRY (waits a beat)

OK.

JERRY puts the MAGAZINE down and follows KEN out the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPEEDWAY - NIGHT

A SPRINT CAR RACE is in progress, in the rain. The CAMERA slowly makes its way to the top of the GRANDSTAND, where we see PETE and MARGIE, and a few others, huddled under the OVERHANG. One of the SPRINTS has just spun out.

MARGIE

Ooh--watch out!

PETE

Whoa--that was close.

MARGIE

You still think Billy can win?

PETE

No problem--if he doesn't, I wasted  
a lot of my time.

MARGIE smiles at PETE, as they drink HOT CHOCOLATE out of a THERMOS.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE- DAY

A CRANE is lifting a section of wall into place. JERRY walks by it and up to a trailer. A large SIGN on the trailer reads ARNOLD'S CONSTRUCTION. The trailer is owned by KEN'S successful company. JERRY enters to find KEN rolling plans up after a CONFERENCE with his CONSTRUCTION MANAGER and other assorted personnel.

KEN (noticing JERRY)

Ho, Jer--be right with you, buddy.

CONSTRUCTION MANAGER

Ken, I think we can wrap this up on  
schedule. If you can get the windows  
here on time.

KEN

They're yours, pal, on the 29th.

They shake hands and KEN turns to JERRY, and puts his arm around his shoulders.

KEN (cont.)

Que pasa, buddy. (softly) Been doing

any thinking?

JERRY looks around nervously as the others leave. Soon KEN and JERRY are alone.

JERRY

Yeah. But I just don't think I need any more crap to think about--I've got enough happening in my life right now . . .

KEN

Jer, what're you afraid of? She's the best. She'll show you how to use your potential.

JERRY

Man, that stuff's too weird for me.

KEN

Relax, Jerry. You know, Elvis consulted with psychics many times in his life.

They exit the TRAILER and as they walk to JERRY'S car a RED CORVETTE drives up, driven by a striking BLONDE, wearing sunglasses, who looks over at KEN.

KEN (cont. to JERRY)

Just a minute.

KEN walks over to the CORVETTE and we can hear them arguing.

BLONDE

Why aren't you ready?

KEN

I'm always ready. Something important came up. We can't go.

BLONDE (pause)

Couldn't you have called?

KEN

I got busy.

The BLONDE stares at him for a few moments then guns the CORVETTE and 'burns out.' KEN shakes his head and walks back to JERRY.

JERRY

What's wrong?

KEN (shrugging shoulders)

Nothing I know of. There's more where she came from.

They get into JERRY'S car.

CUT TO:

EXT. WALTON'S MORTUARY - AFTERNOON

JERRY'S CADILLAC pulls into the parking lot of the mortuary GEORGE'S FAMILY owns. JERRY honks the horn and GEORGE appears.

GEORGE (getting into car)

Trying to wake someone up?

JERRY

Yeah, get the beer?

GEORGE

It's at your house, Shirley dropped it off when she saw Brenda. How you guys doin', ready to explore the unknown?

JERRY

George--stop joking around.

KEN

George wasn't joking, Jerry--the beer's really there.

JERRY looks at them suspiciously, and drives off.

CUT TO:

INT. GYMNASIUM - DAY

Music is blaring at BRENDA and KATY'S AEROBICS CLASS as they finish their workout. They are both breathing hard in their tight-fitting workout gear.

BRENDA

Notice anything different about Jerry lately?

KATY

No stranger than usual, why?

BRENDA

I don't know. He's been . . . preoccupied ever since his mother died. And his new job isn't helping, either.

KATY

But he's making so much money.

BRENDA

I think he was happier owning his own shop.

KATY

He's going with the guys to see George

Jones on Saturday, what's to worry?

CUT TO:

EXT. WANDA THE WISE'S TRAILER - DAY

We see an over-decorated TRAILER in a run-down TRAILER PARK. The FOUR exit the car and stare uneasily before walking up and ringing the TIBETAN BELL at the door.

WANDA (o.c. but everywhere)

Cosmic voyagers . . . make yourselves  
known to the unknown that surrounds  
you.

KEN

She means come on in.

JERRY (looking around)

Yeah, whatever you say.

CUT TO:

INT. WANDA'S TRAILER - DAY

WANDA is sitting at a ROUND TABLE with a CRYSTAL BALL and CANDLES and five chairs. The rest of the TRAILER is separated by thick velvet CURTAINS. The room is dark and she stands and opens her arms wide.

WANDA

Welcome, travelers of the mystic  
highway.

KEN

Oh, wise one, we have arrived.

They sit down. WANDA speaks before anyone can think of anything to say.

WANDA

Dan, congratulations on your promotion.  
George, I'm glad your son's nose is  
healing . . . and Jerry,

EVERYONE looks at JERRY.

WANDA (cont.)

. . . Happy Birthday.

KEN

Oh wonderful wizard, what have you to  
show us?

WANDA

A window on the future, a path to the  
sun. Please hold hands as we attune  
to the proper cosmic vibration.

GEORGE (to DAN, laughing)

Don't get weird on me now.

They all hold hands.

WANDA

I feel a presence . . .

A breeze blows through the ROOM, moving the curtains.

WANDA (cont.)

Oh, spirit speak. What have you to  
tell us?

The CANDLES on the table flicker.

WANDA (cont.)

I see a large building under construc-  
tion. There is a man in an elevator.  
He is falling into darkness . . . deep-



er and deeper, never reaching the bottom . . .

JERRY (whispering to KEN)

That accident, at the Tower's, when Hack Martin bit it . . .

WANDA

SILENCE . . . unless you are asked to speak.

JERRY

Uh . . . sorry.

WANDA

There is another who desires to speak . . . one of greater power . . .

GEORGE (snickering)

Stronger than a Die-hard?

KEN (whispers)

Can it George.

The CAMERA closes on JERRY, who seems to be accepting the SEANCE at face value.

DAN (to JERRY)

Why don't you ask her a question?

WANDA

The spirits await your bidding.

GEORGE

I'll go two bits . . .

KEN (whispering loudly)

George!

JERRY

Uh . . . can you tell me if my mother's happy?

WANDA (after a beat)

I see a woman in a red cotton dress. She has long golden-brown hair and is standing in a garden, smiling.

JERRY

Are there a lot of apple trees around?

WANDA

I see many apples. Romes, Macintoshs, Red Delicious . . .

JERRY

That's it, Red Delicious! (to DAN)  
Mom and Dad's orchard--they grew Red Delicious apples . . .

WANDA

She is with a man, a man dressed in a black sequined suit with a guitar.

GEORGE (to JERRY)

It's Elvis. (points to curtains)  
Look!

The curtains rustle aside and a shimmering image of a young MAN with a GUITAR appears.

APPARITION

You ain't never caught a rabbit,  
You ain't no friend of mine.

JERRY

Holy shit!

The FOUR men stare open-mouthed at the APPARITION as it gyrates wildly in the air.

KEN

Balls of fire--it's really him.

The APPARITION stops playing and takes two steps towards the GROUP.

APPARITION

I am weary.

WANDA (to GROUP)

Keep your hands together, don't break  
the chain.

The APPARITION hangs in the air silently for a few moments.

WANDA (cont.)

Why are you weary, Oh . . . Oh . . .  
tired one?

APPARITION

Because I cannot rest . . .

A COLD WIND blows through the TRAILER, and they hang for a few moments, then KEN elbows JERRY in the side.

JERRY

Why can't you rest?

GEORGE

Good question, Jer.

APPARITION

Ever try to sleep in a coffin?

JERRY

I never have. W-What about you George, . . .

GEORGE shakes his head.

JERRY (cont.)

. . . Dan?

DAN

Nope.

The APPARITION slows it's wild gyrations.

APPARITION

But that is not the reason.

The GROUP waits expectantly.

APPARITION (cont.)

I will never rest as long as so many  
think I am still alive.

JERRY

But so many people have seen you. You  
were in North Dakota last week.

APPARITION

Actually, it was Wyoming. But that  
wasn't me. It was an imposter.

The word 'imposter' reverberates for several seconds as another strong  
breeze blows through the room.

KEN

Ask him what can you do for him, Jer.

JERRY hesitates for a beat.

DAN

Come on, Jerry, help him out.

WANDA

Jerry, only you can help this spirit  
find eternal peace.

JERRY waits a few more beats to let this sink in.

JERRY

What do you want me to do?

KEN, GEORGE and DAN are all supressing laughter as we

FADE TO:

EXT. SPEEDWAY - DAY

PETE is on a creeper under a stock car, in a GARAGE with a sign that  
reads, 'Bowen Racing,' while in the background we hear cars performing  
time trials. MARGIE arrives with a paper bag and walks over to the  
car PETE is under.

MARGIE

Hey, hot shot, you gonna stay under  
there all day, or do you want to  
break for lunch?

PETE quickly comes out from under the car and smiles up at MARGIE.  
His face is covered with grease, but he looks happy and contented.

PETE

Hi, sweetheart, what's in the bag?

MARGIE

Oh, just food, interested? Because if you are, you'll have to put your wrench down for a few minutes.

PETE stands up and puts his arms around his girlfriend.

PETE

Consider it done, how'd you know I was hungry?

PETE starts kissing MARGIE, but she squirms out of his grasp.

MARGIE

You ARE hungry--I don't know what you had in mind, but all you're getting is roast beef.

They laugh and sit down on some TIRES and begin eating. MR. BOWEN walks into the GARAGE and PETE immediately stands up.

MR. BOWEN

Got that transaxle in yet, Pete?

PETE

I'm all done, Mr. Bowen. We were just having some lunch.

MR. BOWEN

Good work. Think you'll get to the other one today?

PETE

I was hoping I'd get a chance to drive this afternoon.

MR. BOWEN

You'll get your chance, son, don't rush things. I've got to have the Buick ready by four today. OK?

MR. BOWEN puts his arm around PETE'S shoulders.

MR. BOWEN (cont.)

I can count on you, can't I?

PETE

Sure, I'll have it done.

MR. BOWEN

Thanks, Pete.

MR. BOWEN exits.

PETE

He likes me--he's gonna let me drive real soon.

MARGIE

You'll be the best. (kisses him) I'll pick you up after work and fix you dinner at my house tonight, how's that?

PETE

Great. Come at four, I'm leaving as soon as I'm done.

FADE TO:

INT. JERRY'S OFFICE - DAY

JERRY picks up the PHONE and calls BRENDA.

JERRY (into phone)

Hon, how're you doin'? Good . . .  
that's swell . . . Honey, I'll be late  
for dinner tonight, I've got to finish  
up this claim I'm working on. Love ya . . .

JERRY hangs up the PHONE as his BOSS, DAVE, walks in his OFFICE.

DAVE

How's it going with the Stillman case,  
Jer?

JERRY

Just finished. I was going to drop  
it off on my way out.

DAVE

By the way, you know you just sent  
Jack Miller's settlement check to the  
Miller Brewing Company?

JERRY

Awww. Jeeez. You're kidding?

DAVE

No problem, we caught it before it  
went out. But I don't think they need  
any extra support from us.

JERRY (smiling)

I support them enough as it is. Sorry,  
Dave, won't happen again.

CUT TO:



EXT. TRACT HOME - DAY

MARGIE'S car pulls up to her mother's house, a middle-class suburban home. JERRY'S CADILLAC is parked in the driveway.

MARGIE

Isn't that your dad's car?

PETE

Sure is, what's he doing here?

MARGIE

I'll bet he's helping mom with the accident she was in last week.

PETE and MARGIE enter the house, where they run into JERRY combing his hair in the hallway.

PETE

Hi, Dad.

JERRY

Oh, Pete--Margie--we were just talking about you two . . . I was helping Sandy, uh, with her claim forms.

SANDY, MARGIE'S mom, exits the bedroom in her BATHROBE.

SANDY

What did you say, Jer? (sees the kids) Oh, hi kids, (backs up a step) you're home early. Jerry just dropped off some forms.

JERRY

Get those back to me right away. Call me if you need any help.

SANDY

Thank you, Jerry, I really appreciate  
it.

JERRY

Bye. (turns to PETE and MARGIE) Bye  
kids.

JERRY makes a somewhat hasty departure, and PETE follows him out to  
his car.

PETE

Dad, what's going on?

JERRY

I'm just doing my job, son.

JERRY closes the car door and drives off, while PETE turns and walks  
back to the house.

CUT TO:

INT. DAN and KATY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A PINOCHLE GAME is in progress at KATY and DAN'S. CLOSE on a HAND  
pulling in four CARDS on the GREEN TABLE.

DAN

That's eighteen. We made it again,  
honey.

JERRY

Damn. I don't know how you always do  
it.

DAN

Come on Jer, it's only four cents a  
point.

BRENDA (to JERRY)

Looks like you're brown-bagging it  
next week. Don't worry, I'll make  
your lunch.

JERRY collects the CARDS and shuffles them as DAN writes the scores  
on a TABLET.

KATY

Dan, you can use your winnings to pay  
for the trip.

DAN

Either that or Jerry can carry my pack.

JERRY

Fat chance on door number two.

DAN laughs.

BRENDA

Where are you guys going, have you  
decided yet?

DAN & JERRY (simultaneously)

The Snake . . . the Truckee . . .  
The Truckee . . . the Snake . . .

DAN and JERRY look at each other.

DAN

I do believe, Jer, that we know where  
we're going.

JERRY

Sure, we do.

The TWO men turn and face their wives.

JERRY & DAN (again)

The Snake.  
The Truckee.

JERRY (glaring at DAN)

Actually, we're still a little up in  
the air.

BRENDA

Well, when you come down, we'd like  
to know where you're going, so we can  
warn the unfortunate populace.

They laugh as JERRY deals the CARDS and EVERYONE looks at their HANDS.

KATY

Fifteen.

BRENDA (staring at JERRY)

Twenty.

DAN

Jeez. What'd you catch? I'll say  
twenty-one.

JERRY

Thirty.

DAN

Jer, it's all yours.

JERRY

Hearts.

They begin to play.

KATY (to JERRY)

How's Sandy doing, Jerry? I saw you  
over there the other day.

JERRY

Oh . . . fine. I'm helping her with her  
claim. You remember that fender-bender  
she had?

BRENDA

Door to door claim service? How  
thoughtful.

JERRY

Just helping out, and that trick's  
ours.

DAN (to KATY)

How about a little help, Hon?

KATY (pointedly)

To keep you from DIGGING too deep a  
hole?

JERRY

Hey, watch the table talk, or I'll club  
you two.

DAN

We've got to do something besides watch

you take all the tricks.

JERRY

Shoe's a bit tighter on the other foot,  
huh?

BRENDA (looking at JERRY'S pile)

Looks like we're over the top.

JERRY (smiling)

And, I'm eating out next week. The big  
'E's' smiling on me.

FADE TO:

INT. BAR - NIGHT

The BOYS enter a BAR after the George Jones Concert. It is smokey and wood-paneled, and country music blares from a jukebox. JERRY enters last, walking slowly.

GEORGE (to JERRY)

Hey cowboy, you're walkin' like a man  
who just rode in on a cigarette.

KEN

You want a pillow, partner?

DAN

I thought you were just yelling about  
the song.

JERRY

If that heifer hadn't of sat on me  
and knocked my cigarette into my seat,  
I'd be fine.

KEN

You shouldn't smoke, and she was makin'  
a pass at you.

JERRY

I wish she would'a passed me before  
she sat down.

They walk over and sit at the BAR, as JERRY, standing, orders drinks.

JERRY (cont. to BARTENDER)

Two drafts, a brandy, and . . .

JERRY looks over at GEORGE.

JERRY (cont.)

. . . sex on the beach.

The BARTENDER, a good-looking young WOMAN, smiles.

BARTENDER

And what, may I ask, is sex on the  
beach?

GEORGE

A small slice of heaven--vodka, o.j.,  
splash of cranberry, and a flooat  
of peach schnaps over the top.

BARTENDER

Oooh, I'll have to remember that.

She leaves to get their drinks.

JERRY

What do you see in that drink?

GEORGE

Well, if anybody ever asks me when's the last time I had sex on the beach, I can tell 'em a couple a times a week.

KEN

Cute, but totally insignificant to the task at hand.

JERRY

This whole thing gives me the willies. Not to mention being illegal.

KEN

Not here, man.

KEN leads them over to a table on a riser by the small stage. They all sit down, except for JERRY who stands by the table. The WAITRESS brings over their drinks. KEN flips a twenty on the table.

KEN (cont.)

Keep the change.

WAITRESS

Thanks.

WAITRESS exits.

KEN (to JERRY)

Well, we've decided. We're going to scout it out on our trip, and if everything looks OK, we'll go the next weekend and do it. Are you in?

DAN



Hey, Jer, it sounds like fun.

GEORGE

Yeah. What could go wrong?

JERRY

You guys are sick, really sick.

The THREE smile at JERRY.

JERRY (cont.)

I mean, I don't really need a mummy  
in my shrine, even if it is Elvis.

GEORGE

We're not doing it for his body, we're  
doing it for his spirit. Remember?  
He did ask us.

DAN

Everyone will look up to you, even  
more than now.

The THREE smile at each other, on the edge of laughter.

JERRY

Let me think on it a bit. (pause)  
You guys want another round?

THE THREE

Yeah . . . same thing.

JERRY walks away to get the drinks. As he leaves, he mumbles, seemingly  
to himself.

GEORGE

We sure got him goin' now.

KEN

Yeah, we're playing him like a fish on a line. I don't know how he ever got to where he is today.

GEORGE

Hard work, Ken.

KEN

My ass. He's the luckiest son-of-a-bitch I've ever met.

DAN

So, why do you stick around with him?

GEORGE (to KEN)

Hoping it will rub off?

DAN (changing subject)

Well, at least we're all gonna' get into shape.

KEN

I'll show you guys shape. When I was in the 101st., we had to be in shape. Our lives depended on it.

GEORGE

Ken, big difference, no one's gonna' die over this.

KEN pats GEORGE'S beer belly.

KEN

Maybe you'll even live longer.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR RESTROOM - NIGHT

JERRY enters and ponys up to the URINAL.

JERRY (to himself)

Well, what do you think about this?  
You like it? Yeah?

Another PATRON walks up to the URINAL next to JERRY'S.

JERRY (cont.)

OK, whatever you want.

PATRON

You talking to me, buddy?

JERRY looks over and sees a GIANT BIKER next to him.

JERRY

Ah, no, just thinking out loud.

JERRY zips up. He looks down and we see WET SPOTS all over the front of his JEANS.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - NIGHT

JERRY is returning with the DRINKS.

DAN

Shhh. Here he comes.

JERRY sets their DRINKS on the table and starts to sit, but grimaces and quickly stands back up.

JERRY

Guys, I've been thinkin' . . .

GEORGE

What happened in there, buddy, run into  
a hurricane?

The BOYS look at his JEANS and laugh.

KEN (interrupting)

Jer, ol' buddy, let me do the thinking,  
OK?

The BOYS are all laughing uproariously.

DAN (toasting)

To Ken's thinking!

JERRY reluctantly clinks glasses with them as the laughter rolls on.

FADE TO:

EXT. GIANT BACKYARD MONTAGE - DAY

A MONTAGE of TRAINING SCENES: We find ourselves in the BACKYARD of  
KEN'S sprawling country home, where KEN has set up an OBSTACLE COURSE.

We follow them as they jog through the surrounding WOODS, watch JERRY  
falling from a rope ladder into the mud below, GEORGE tripping and  
becoming tangled in old tires, and see DAN, swinging on a rope, slamming  
into a tree.

KEN helps each of them through their difficulties, like a kindly DRILL  
INSTRUCTOR.

CUT TO:

INT. KEN'S SAUNA - DAY

KEN

You guys did OK, but I think we need a little more work.

JERRY

Are you kidding? Not tonight, or tomorrow, either.

DAN

Or the day after.

GEORGE

I think we're ready.

CUT TO:

INT. JERRY and BRENDA'S BATHROOM - MORNING

JERRY is getting ready for work. He looks into the MIRROR and puts his hands to his head. The CAMERA closes in on a few GREY HAIRS. JERRY reaches under the sink and pulls out a hidden KIT BAG, takes out a bottle of 'GRECIAN FORMULA', and rubs some into his hair. He puts the bottle back in the KIT BAG and hides it just as the door opens.

BRENDA (kissing him)

Good morning, lover boy. You were sure tossing and turning last night. Everything all right?

JERRY

Yeah. I guess work is getting me down.

BRENDA (hugging him)

Why don't we take a few days off and get away? It'd be real good for the both of us.

JERRY

I'd like that, but I've got so much to

do I don't see how I can.

BRENDA

It's easy. You just say "Boss, I need some time off."

JERRY

It's not that easy. They depend on me down there.

BRENDA

I do too, Jerry. (pause) Have you been working out? Your love handles are shrinking.

JERRY

Yeah. I want to get back into shape for my best gal. And our trip's going to be pretty rough.

BRENDA

Why aren't you going somewhere you can take it easy, like you usually do?

JERRY

A man needs a challenge sometimes.

BRENDA

Speaking of challenges, why don't I sign us up for some dance lessons? Sounds like your knee is a whole lot better.

JERRY

Awww, I can't. Dancing's different.

BRENDA

Right. I've got a better idea. Why don't you finish the Chevy? Pete really needs a car.

JERRY

When I get back, I promise.

CUT TO:

INT. DAVE'S OFFICE - DAY

The walls are covered with sales award plaques and pictures of little league teams and groups of insurance salesmen. DAVE is sitting behind the large mahogany desk when JERRY knocks.

DAVE

Come in, Jerry.

JERRY (entering)

You wanted to see me?

DAVE

Have a seat, Jerry.

JERRY sits down and looks at his BOSS.

DAVE (cont.)

You ready for a vacation?

JERRY

Yeah.

DAVE walks around the desk and sits on the front of it.

DAVE

Why don't you take three weeks, Jer.

JERRY (surprised)

I thought I only had one week coming.

DAVE

We lost Sid's account.

JERRY

Oh, no. I worked my ass off for that guy.

DAVE

Sid says you cut him on a couple of deals.

JERRY

I don't know what he's talking about. I gave him all the plums.

DAVE

I know you were trying to save us some money, but we can't be losing our best accounts. That's why I want you to take some time off. Jerry, you need to re-evaluate your goals.

JERRY stares straight ahead and doesn't say anything.

DAVE (cont.)

I want you to be happy, I want our customers to be happy, and I want the company to be happy.

JERRY shifts in his chair.

JERRY



I thought I was doing fine.

DAVE

You were. You're the best damn rep  
I ever had, but lately . . .

JERRY (interrupting)

Don't cut me loose, Dave, I'm still the  
best. Just give me another chance,  
watch me.

DAVE

Hold on, Jerry. I'm not letting you  
go, I just want you to take some time  
off. (pause) And I don't want you  
back until your head's screwed on  
straight. OK?

JERRY

OK. Thanks, Dave.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPEEDWAY - DAY

JERRY is watching STOCK CARS run laps. He walks into the pit area  
just as one of them pulls in and PETE gets out excitedly. He sees  
his father and his expression changes.

JERRY (cont.)

Nice driving, son. You handled her  
real well out there.

PETE

I did OK.

JERRY

You want some lunch? I've got a light  
schedule today. We could get a pizza . . .

PETE (interrupting)

I've got too much to do, thanks anyway.

PETE walks around the front of the car, pops the hood and gets a wrench  
from a TOOLBOX.

PETE (cont.)

I've got to get this finished, Dad.  
They need it tomorrow.

JERRY walks over to PETE.

JERRY

Something bothering you, son?

PETE

No. Something bothering you?

JERRY

Like what?

PETE starts to work on the car, not saying anything.

JERRY (cont.)

You know you can always talk to me man  
to man.

PETE

Something's different now, and I think  
you know what it is.

JERRY

Well . . . ahh . . . we'll get the

Chevy finished.

PETE (exasperated)

Dad, I've got work to do.

JERRY drops his shoulders and looks away from PETE.

JERRY (softly)

How should I handle this?

PETE

What'd you say?

CUT TO:

The ELVIS SHRINE - DAY

The GANG is gathered, and in the throes of a serious conversation.  
We see PIZZA BOXES and BEER CANS littering the bar.

GEORGE

Jerry, what do you get when you cross  
an atheist with a dyslexic?

JERRY

Got me, George.

GEORGE

A person who doesn't believe in a dog.

DAN, KEN and GEORGE laugh.

JERRY

I don't get it. What's a dyslexic?

DAN

Someone who reverses their letters.

JERRY just stands there, thinking hard.

GEORGE

Never mind, Jer.

KEN

OK. Everybody straight on their responsibilities? George, you get the lay of the land, Dan, you scope out . . .

JERRY (laughing)

I get it. I get it! Ha, ha, ha . . .

KEN (impatiently)

. . . DAN, you scope out the alarms, Jerry, check out the perimeter, and I'll figure the equipment. I want to be 100% ready when we go there for real.

DAN (saluting)

Aye, aye, Sarge.

KEN

I want you all to fill out these post-cards with stories of all the big fish we've caught. When we layover in Denver, a friend of mine's gonna mail them for me.

GEORGE

This is gonna be great.

JERRY

How do you spell Sasquatch?

DAN

Just write Bigfoot.

CUT TO:

INT. ELVIS SHRINE - LATER THAT EVENING

The room is DARK. The CAMERA finds JERRY sitting at the BAR next to the ELVIS' LAMP. He is staring at a PICTURE of his MOTHER. A GLASS and a nearly empty WHISKEY BOTTLE are beside him. The door opens and a shaft of LIGHT falls on his face.

BRENDA (in doorway)

You OK, hon? (pause) Why don't you  
come to bed.

JERRY drains the last of the WHISKEY into the GLASS and toasts his MOTHER'S PICTURE.

JERRY

Goodnight. Sleep tight.

BRENDA (frustrated)

I'm sure you will.

She leaves.

CUT TO:

INT. AND EXT. MONTAGE - EVENING

From an AIRPLANE we see the GANG looking down at the lights of MEMPHIS, touching down and taxiing on the runway, getting their LUGGAGE and renting a car, and sightseeing through MEMPHIS at night on their way to the HOTEL.

They check in, put their luggage in their rooms and hit the HOTEL BAR. They sit at a table and wait to be served.

GEORGE

This is just great. Memphis in the spring with my best buddies. We're gonna have us some time. Yeehaw!

The cute BARMAID, wearing tight-fitting jeans and a low-cut blouse, comes over to take their drink orders.

BARMAID

What do you cowboys want, besides a hoot and a holler?

GEORGE

I'll give you a hoot if you give me a holler. (laughs)

JERRY (to BARMAID)

How 'bout you and I do some hollerin' after you get off tonight?

BARMAID

Won't that be past your bedtime, Pops?

Everyone laughs, except JERRY.

JERRY (after an embarrassed beat)

You know what they say, " The older the wood, the hotter the fire."

KEN

It's the harder the wood, the hotter the fire, Jer, and whatever you're selling, baby, I'll have.

BARMAID

Well, I've got hot drinks and cold ones, tall ones and short ones, sweet and sour, wet or dry . . .

GEORGE

I can only think of one thing to drink  
in Memphis.

KEN

Right. J.D. with a beer back.

DAN

Yeah.

GEORGE

Right on, uuh I mean, 'sho nuff.'

They all laugh as the BARMAID goes to get their drinks. They are acting like schoolboys on vacation, especially JERRY, who displays signs of growing intensity.

JERRY (slaps table)

Hoo weee! We're really here again.  
The Heartland. I feel like a new man,  
like I'm seventeen, all over again.

GEORGE

Just don't go getting any cheerleaders  
pregnant, (smiles) you've been down  
that road before.

JERRY

You mean I should have waited all those  
years, like you did?

The CAMERA closes on KEN'S face, looking uncomfortable.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BRENDA'S SUNNY WORKROOM - DAY

BRENDA and KATY are arranging dried flowers. We still hear the VOICEOVER from the previous scene.

DAN (o.c.)

Looks like it's worked pretty well  
for both you guys.

JERRY (o.c.)

Awww, but mine was an accident.

The VOICES fade out and we hear BRENDA and KATY talking. Several completed beautiful arrangements are in front of them on the table.

KATY

Genius, sheer poetry. You outdid  
yourself, again.

BRENDA

I've always liked beautiful things.

KATY (soon)

Are things any better with you and  
Jerry?

BRENDA

I don't know. He's getting so . . .  
distant. It's like he's not sure who  
he is anymore.

KATY

Well, I guess maybe he's working too  
hard. Sandy's case must be more com-  
plicated than normally.

BRENDA (looking at KATY)

He hasn't mentioned any special prob-



lems to me.

KATY looks BRENDA in the eye and then goes back to their flower arranging.

DISSOLVE BACK TO:

INT. MEMPHIS HOTEL BAR - EVENING.

GEORGE

That was no accident, Brenda was your reward for getting carried off the field . . .

KEN (testily)

Just think, Jer, if I hadn't missed that block, you might not be married now.

DAN (to KEN)

Right, and Brenda might be with you?

They all laugh.

JERRY

Yeah, and if my knee was still good, I'd a been in 'Nam . . .

GEORGE

You'd have been a general by now, Jerry.

The BARMAID returns with their drinks.

BARMAID (to JERRY)

Are y'all a general? How distinguished.

DAN

Say hello to General Halverson.

KEN (just loud enough to hear)

Generally confused.

They all laugh. KEN gives the BARMAID a twenty.

KEN (cont.)

Keep the change, honey.

BARMAID

Are you a general, too?

She walks away as they all laugh heartily.

CUT TO:

INT. GRACELAND - DAY

The FOUR, wearing SUNGLASSES, look like they are 'casing the joint' as they take the guided tour. They stop by the roped-off living room. A small painting of ELVIS graces a wall.

GUIDE

The front room has been restored to the way it was when Elvis lived here. The painting you see was not up then, as Elvis didn't want pictures of himself on the living room walls.

JERRY stands close to the portrait, takes off his SUNGLASSES, and stops a passing COUPLE, dressed in polyester.

JERRY (to COUPLE)

Elvis and me were born on the same day.  
Can you see a resemblance?

JERRY strikes a pose similar to the picture.

WOMAN

By God, Harold, he does look a little

like Elvis.

HAROLD

Well, there is a bit of a resemblance.

JERRY (to COUPLE)

Think so?! Thanks. Thanks, a lot.

JERRY walks over to his FRIENDS.

JERRY (cont.)

Did you hear that? They think I look like Elvis.

DAN

Must be the hair, Jer.

GEORGE

Gotta be the eyes.

KEN

Naw, it's his breath. Jerry hasn't brushed since the King died.

They all laugh.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRACELAND BACKYARD - DAY

GEORGE takes measured steps by the POOL and then stands at the GRAVESITE. The GUIDE talks on in the b.g.

GEORGE (to GRAVE)

Just kidding, big guy. (solemnly)  
I wish we could've partied together.

He hangs for a moment, then walks on. DAN watches GEORGE leave and

then he walks up to the GRAVE.

DAN (after a long pause)

Well, 'E', it's me again. Nothing much  
has changed, just getting older. (pause)  
Keep an eye on us, will you?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HALVERSON HOUSE - DAY

The PHONE is ringing at JERRY and BRENDA'S house. A HAND comes into  
the frame and picks the receiver up.

BRENDA

Hello?

On the other end of the conversation is DAVE, JERRY'S BOSS, who is  
in his OFFICE.

DAVE

Hi, Brenda. Is Jerry home?

BRENDA

Oh, hi Dave. No, he isn't. He's with  
the boys, fishing.

DAVE

Good, great. I'm glad he took my advice  
and got away for awhile. He could really  
use a rest.

BRENDA

Really?

DAVE

Brenda, I'm sure you've seen the signs.  
He just hasn't been himself, lately.

BRENDA

Dave, has he been having problems at work?

DAVE

I wouldn't call them problems, just some . . . setbacks.

BRENDA

Well, I'll have him call you when he gets back.

DAVE

No need. Just tell him I'm glad to see he's finally relaxing.

BRENDA

Bye, Dave. Thanks for calling.

She hangs up, looking concerned.

BACK TO:

EXT. GRACELAND - DAY.

JERRY walks next to the WALL that surrounds the GRAVES, looking at it closely, until KEN motions him over to where he is standing.

KEN (to JERRY walking up)

Look at this. (he motions to one of the metal tablets covering a grave)  
Bet you could pop that baby off with an acme King Kong pry bar.

JERRY

Uh . . . think so?

KEN (softly)

Piece of cake. Let's get the guys  
and get out of here.

JERRY

Hold your horses, I want to say 'hi'  
to Elvis before I go.

KEN

Don't take all day. OK?

JERRY turns and walks over to the GRAVES in SOFT FOCUS.

JERRY (standing by the GRAVES)

Hi, Vernon. Hi, Gladys, Grandma. Hiya  
little guy. (pause) Hi, Elvis.

JERRY stands before the GRAVE for a few moments trying to frame his  
troubled thoughts.

JERRY (cont.)

Could you have a word with the big  
guy for me? You're a lot closer  
to him than I am. Things have been  
pretty tough for me lately, and I,  
I guess I've been screwing up. You  
know what I did and you know how sorry  
I am . . . but I just can't seem to  
find a way out. I need your help . . .

JERRY stands pondering for a few beats.

JERRY (cont.)

. . . and if you help me, I'll help  
you.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

JERRY'S MEMORY: He takes a handoff at midfield and breaks through the line into the open. He dodges a few tacklers, heads for the end zone, and gets tackled at the ONE YARD LINE. The CAMERA pans to the cheering CROWD and we see the pretty, blonde CHEERLEADER, cheering wildly. JERRY, less than happy that he didn't score a touchdown, is watching her.

DISSOLVE BACK TO:

EXT. GRACELAND - DAY

JERRY walks away from the GRAVESITE.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPEEDWAY - DAY

We see a STOCK CAR, engine screaming, running alone around the track. The CAMERA DOLLYS in on a group of watching MECHANICS and other SPEEDWAY-TYPE characters.

The CAR runs well until it spins out in a corner, hitting the wall, then back across the track into the infield. The DRIVER exits the car through the window and pulls off his HELMET. PETE walks unsteadily around the car.

MECHANIC #1 (running up)

You all right?

PETE

Yeah, came in a little low on the corner.

MECHANIC #1

Wow, you're a lucky guy. (smiles)

MECHANIC #2 and several others run up.

MECHANIC #2

Whoa, Pete, bummer.

PETE shakes his head from side to side, smiling.

PETE

Guess I know what I'm doing for the  
rest of this week.

A few of his PALS pat him on the back as the TOW TRUCK arrives.

CUT TO:

INT. POST OFFICE - DAY

BRENDA enters with a bundle of envelopes and runs into SANDY, who is  
at her post office box.

BRENDA

Hi, Sandy. How're you doing?

SANDY

Oh, hi Brenda. I'm OK.

BRENDA (after a beat)

How are things going with your claim?

SANDY

Well, it always seems to take longer  
than it should.

BRENDA

Lucky you.

SANDY

I'd like to talk, but I've gotta run.  
See you.

SANDY exits.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEMPHIS MONTAGE - DAY



We see scenes of the BOYS driving through downtown MEMPHIS, all singing along with the car radio except JERRY. The song ends.

GEORGE (to JERRY)

What's the matter, buddy? This is Memphis, for God's sake. Liven up a bit.

DAN

If you were any less lively, George'd have himself a new customer.

JERRY

I'm serious, because this trip's serious.

DAN

The main reason we're here is to have fun, Jer.

KEN

Yeah, that's number one.

CUT TO:

EXT. WAX MUSEUM PARKING LOT - DAY

The car pulls into the parking lot of a WAX MUSEUM.

CUT TO:

INT. WAX MUSEUM - DAY

The CAMERA finds JERRY staring at a ZOMBIE in a scene from 'The Night of the Living Dead,' when KEN walks up.

KEN (cont.)

Keep it up Jerry, you can make him blink.

JERRY (startled)

It's eyes moved when I walked by.

KEN

What're you, afraid of him?

JERRY

No.

KEN

Show him. Flip him off.

KEN walks on. JERRY looks both ways and then 'flips off' the ZOMBIE and follows him.

CUT TO:

INT. WAX MUSEUM - DAY

DAN and GEORGE are looking at a scene of DAVEY CROCKETT fighting a BEAR. DAVEY is in the grasp of the bleeding BEAR, leaning away from his gaping jaws, with an upraised BOWIE KNIFE in his right hand.

GEORGE (in TV announcer's voice)

Do you find you just can't shake loose of that morning 'Jerry mouth?'

DAN

Speaking of which, George, it's time to tell him what's really going on.

GEORGE

Remember, we agreed Ken would tell him after we got back. He's calling the play.

DAN

But George, I'm afraid he's going  
to go off the deep end.

GEORGE

He'll be that much more relieved when  
he finds out it's all a joke. Besides,  
I don't want to be the one to tell him,  
do you? (laughs)

Just then KEN and JERRY walk up and the FOUR walk over to a nearby  
scene of ELVIS, playing his guitar and singing.

GEORGE (cont. to JERRY)

Doesn't he look great? (whispers)  
I can do better than that, I've even  
got his dental charts.

CUT TO:

EXT. MONTAGE "CATCH N' KEEP BASS FARM" - DAY

We see the GANG walking up to THREE BOYS toting a large stringer of  
BASS. KEN pays the KIDS and the MEN proceed to take pictures of  
themselves with the FISH before returning the stringer to the BOYS.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPORT - NIGHT

The GANG debarks the plane and are greeted by their WIVES. No one  
is there for KEN.

BRENDA (kissing JERRY)

Welcome back Jerry. We all missed you.

JERRY looks at BRENDA carefully.

JERRY

I'm glad to be back. I missed you,  
too.

JERRY goes to kiss her, but she is already talking to KEN.

BRENDA

Did you boys manage to steer clear  
of trouble?

KEN (smiling)

Sweetheart, we're so clean, we squeak.

JERRY

Eek, eek, eek.

GEORGE

I think Jerry can use some oil.

BRENDA

He seems pretty well oiled to me.

JERRY

Flying makes me nervous, Honey, it  
always has.

DAN

Hey, let's go see if they've lost our  
luggage.

They ALL walk through the airport to the baggage claim. Just as they  
get to the carousel, they see JERRY'S suitcase sliding down,  
hitting the bottom, and opening up, spewing clothes about.

JERRY

There's mine. Oh no! Great, just great.  
A perfect ending.

BRENDA (surveying the mess)

You know Jerry, that suitcase is a lot  
like someone I know right now.

JERRY

And who might that be?

BRENDA

Let's go home, it's late. Goodnight everybody.

ALL

Goodnight.

CUT TO:

INT. HALVERSON LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

JERRY and BRENDA enter. BRENDA stops at a closet, picks out BLANKETS and pitches them at him.

BRENDA

Here. I think you'll sleep better on the couch tonight.

JERRY (surprised)

W . . . why?

BRENDA

Let's just say I think we both need a little time alone to think about what's important in our lives . . .

JERRY (interrupting)

Oh, I see . . .

BRENDA

. . . and who we want to sleep with.

JERRY

What's that supposed to mean?

JERRY turns, not looking her in the eyes, and walks into the KITCHEN.

BRENDA (following him)

What it means is, if you want to act out your adolescent fantasies, you can do it on your own.

JERRY opens the REFRIGERATOR door and takes out a BEER and SANDWICH fixings, including a large SALAMI.

JERRY

I don't get it.

JERRY slices the end off of the SALAMI and starts to make his SANDWICH.

BRENDA

Well let me lay it out for you then.

BRENDA lays her hand on the SALAMI and we see her raise it higher and higher as she rails at JERRY.

BRENDA (cont.)

If you're going to run around like a randy sixteen-year-old, make me look like a complete fool by consorting with someone who's almost family, then you can walk out of here right now. And this . . .

BRENDA, realizing she has the SALAMI in her hand, begins to hit JERRY with it.

BRENDA (cont.)

. . . this meal is over!

BRENDA pounds JERRY a few times, until he finally gets the SALAMI away from her. She stomps out of the room and we hear the BEDROOM DOOR

slam.

JERRY, dazed, watches her leave, then looks down at the SALAMI.

FADE TO:

EXT. SPEEDWAY - MORNING

We see a quickly lightening morning sky, and hear birds singing in the background as the SUN pops above the horizon. A low rumbling sound in the background quickly grows to a roar as a STOCK CAR thunders over The CAMERA.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPEEDWAY - MORNING

The car is going into the same corner where PETE had spun out previously. This time the car makes the corner and continues down the straightaway.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPEEDWAY PIT AREA - MORNING

The car pulls into the PIT AREA. MECHANIC #1 and MECHANIC #2 meet the car and help PETE out.

MECHANIC #1 (excited, to PETE)

2:44:01.

MECHANIC #2

Spectacular, dude.

PETE looks like he hasn't touched ground.

PETE

We better get the car back in the shop before anybody shows up.

MECHANIC #1

I'll get the gate.

PETE gets back in the car and drives out the gate to the shop area.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONSTRUCTION TRAILER - DAY

BRENDA arrives at KEN'S job site and stops the car by the TRAILER, just as KEN walks out.

KEN

Hi.

BRENDA

I need to talk to you.

KEN

I'm glad you came. I was going to call. Come on in.

KEN puts his arm around BRENDA as they walk into the TRAILER. Inside, they sit down on some folding chairs.

KEN (cont.)

Can I get you a drink?

BRENDA shakes her head.

KEN (cont.)

Coffee?

BRENDA

Have any fruit juice, or tea?

KEN

Let's just take a look here.

KEN walks over to a refrigerator and opens it.

KEN (cont.)



How about a V8?

BRENDA

That'll do.

KEN brings over juice and paper cups, and sits down.

KEN

I guess you're not here to talk about  
sheet rock.

BRENDA

No, I'm here to talk about your best  
friend.

KEN

You mean 'old thunder breath?'

BRENDA

Ken, I'm worried about him. He's drift-  
ing further away from me every day.

KEN

Why?

BRENDA

I don't think he knows what he's doing  
and that's the problem.

KEN

Let's talk about it over lunch.

CUT TO:

INT. BOWEN RACING SHOP - DAY

PETE is at the workbench when MR. BOWEN shows up.

MR. BOWEN

Morning, Pete.

PETE

Hi, Mr. Bowen.

MR. BOWEN

How's everything going?

PETE

Real good. I've got number 49 running like a champ.

MR. BOWEN

I heard about your little miscalculation in the corner the other day.

PETE

But, she's OK now. She's running better than before.

MR. BOWEN

I also heard you ran a 2:44.

PETE

I can explain that.

MR. BOWEN

No need, Pete. I'd like to see some more of that. How about if you spend an hour a day with Richard.

PETE

Richard?

MR. BOWEN

He doesn't have a race for the next few weeks, and I think he'd be the best one to teach a young driver. Do it in the morning when you're fresh.

PETE (grinning)

Sure. Thanks Mr. Bowen.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

KEN and BRENDA are finishing their lunch and a long conversation.

BRENDA

. . . so that's how it is. What can we do before he gets any worse?

KEN

I think you're over-reacting. Jerry has always been his own man. Lately, though, I agree with you. He has changed.

BRENDA

Then you've seen it, too.

KEN

Yeah, that faraway look in his eyes. Like he's searching for something no-one else can see.

BRENDA

Ken, will you help me?

KEN reaches out and holds BRENDA'S hand across the table.

KEN

I've always been here for you. You  
know that.

CUT TO:

EXT. SID'S AUTO BODY - DAY

JERRY enters. After several moments we hear SID.

SID (o.c.)

You here again? I told you to keep  
your ass away!

We hear the sounds of a FIST hitting a FACE, followed by a BODY falling  
into a HUBCAP DISPLAY.

CUT TO:

INT. HALVERSON HOUSE - DAY

JERRY walks in his front door. BRENDA, dishrag in hand, sees him from  
the kitchen.

BRENDA

How was your visit with Sid?

CLOSE: JERRY'S face. He has a black eye.

BRENDA (cont. noticing)

Oh, Honey. What happened?

JERRY

He didn't want to talk.

CUT TO:

INT. WALTON'S MORTUARY - DAY

GEORGE is working on a CORPSE in the embalming room. The BODY on the table is covered to the neck by a blanket. A 'HAPPY FACE' cardboard cutout, held in place by eyeglass frames, is resting on top of the face. GEORGE'S FATHER, FRANK, walks into the room.

FRANK

I thought I taught you to have more respect for the dead.

GEORGE

I got lots of respect, Dad. It's just Old Man Snodgrass looked bad enough alive--dead he's downright gruesome.

FRANK (chuckles)

Yeah, I guess it does suit the old sourpuss.

DAN sticks his head through the door.

DAN

Hey, ready to go? (sees corpse) Nice job. Anyone I know?

GEORGE

Old Man Snodgrass.

DAN

Best I've ever seen him look. Who'd he leave his money to?

GEORGE

I hear the Moose Lodge got it all, except for a stuffed marlin, a spittoon, and his gold-plated toothpicks. He left those for his family to fight

over.

DAN

I'd take the marlin. Buy you a beer at Orlando's?

GEORGE

You're on, buddy.

CUT TO:

INT. BOWLING ALLEY - ANOTHER DAY

KEN and BRENDA are sitting at a table overlooking the lanes. The WAITRESS brings them two giant SUNDAES.

BRENDA

I can't eat all this.

KEN

What you can't eat, I'll finish.

KEN scoots closer to BRENDA.

KEN (cont.)

Remember that date we had here in high school?

BRENDA (laughing)

Everything went wrong that night.

KEN

First, I dropped the ball on your foot, then, we tried to park and got a ticket, and you got home so late, your dad called my dad in the morning.

They both laugh at the recollection.

BRENDA

You always knew how to show a girl an exciting time.

She soon becomes serious.

BRENDA (cont.)

Ken, we have to do something for Jerry, fast.

KEN

I've got a plan. We're going to get away next weekend, see Hank Williams Jr., and we're all going to talk with him. I promise you.

BRENDA

Thanks, Ken. I knew I could count on you.

KEN

Let's go have a drink. Ever have sex on the beach?

BRENDA

Yes. Why?

KEN

No. It's a drink.

BRENDA (laughs)

OK. Just one.

CUT TO:

INT. ORLANDO'S BAR - NIGHT

GEORGE and DAN are having a drink at the BAR.

GEORGE

. . . so the lawyer says, " No problem.  
I'll go out and sleep in the barn. Five  
minutes later the cow and the pig knock  
on the back door!"

GEORGE and DAN laugh.

DAN (after a pause)

George, he's losing it.

GEORGE becomes silent and looks at DAN.

GEORGE

So, what do you want to do?

DAN

We've gotta tell him, tomorrow night  
at the concert.

GEORGE

Ken should tell him. If he doesn't,  
then I will.

DAN

Or I will.

They slap a 'high five.'

CUT TO:

INT. BOWLING ALLEY BAR BOOTH - AFTERNOON

KEN and BRENDA are enjoying conversation and drinks.



KEN

You know, if things had gone different,  
it would have changed all our lives.

BRENDA

Would that have made them any better?

KEN slides closer.

KEN

It would've made my mine better.

BRENDA

Ken, we can't change the past.

KEN

Yeah, but we can change the present.

KEN reaches out, puts his arm around BRENDA, and tries to kiss her.

BRENDA

No. Ken!

KEN

What's the matter? You know how I  
feel.

BRENDA (pushing him away)

Whatever we had was over, twenty-five  
years ago. I need your help, Ken, not  
your memories.

BRENDA stands up and walks out the door. KEN, enraged, knocks the  
glasses on the floor.

CUT TO:

EXT. HALVERSON DRIVEWAY - EVENING

JERRY pulls into his driveway and sees PETE tying down a load of FURNITURE in a pick-up truck.

JERRY

What's up, partner?

PETE

Margie and I decided to move in together.  
We just got an apartment.

JERRY

And you didn't tell me?

PETE

It's happened kind of fast, Dad. I  
just told Mom.

JERRY

You can't afford to do that. What  
are you, crazy?

PETE

Don't call me crazy. I know what I'm  
doing.

JERRY

Are you telling me I don't?

JERRY grabs PETE'S arm.

PETE

Let go, Dad.

JERRY and PETE look into each other's eyes.

CUT TO:

EXT. HANK WILLIAMS JR. CONCERT - AFTERNOON

The BOYS are in a large outdoor amphitheater. The CAMERA ZOOMS IN on the STAGE.

CUT TO:

EXT. HANK WILLIAMS JR. CONCERT - AFTERNOON

The GANG is together, sitting on the lawn, enjoying the concert and a few beers. JERRY is noticeably tense and drinking heavily.

GEORGE (nudging JERRY)

Hey, guy. Loosen up a bit. You look like you're wearing a girdle.

JERRY

I'm having a good time, are you?

GEORGE

You just look a little wound up, that's all.

JERRY (flapping his arms)

I'm loose. I'm loose.

KEN (getting up)

I gotta go pee.

GEORGE

Yeah, I gotta go, too.

GEORGE gives DAN a look.

DAN

Oh, me, too. Jer, hold down the fort.

JERRY

Right. I'll wait here for the cavalry.

GEORGE, KEN and DAN laugh and walk off.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEN'S RESTROOM - AFTERNOON

GEORGE and DAN stop KEN outside the BATHROOM.

DAN (to KEN)

We've decided it's time to tell Jerry everything. Now.

GEORGE

Yeah, he's about to crack.

KEN (looking to both sides)

You can tell him anything you like, but we're going to Memphis. Tonight.

DAN

Tonight?! You're out of your mind.

KEN

Jerry's coming, are you? I've got the tickets right here in my pocket.

KEN goes in.

GEORGE

We've got to stop this.

DAN

Right.

GEORGE

Let's take a whiz, get Jerry, and get out of here.

CUT TO:

EXT. CONCERT - AFTERNOON

DAN and GEORGE walk up to find KEN with his arm around JERRY, talking conspiratorily with him.

JERRY (to DAN and GEORGE)

Well, everybody ready?

DAN

Jerry, we're not going. This whole thing has gone too far. We meant it to be a joke.

GEORGE

Yeah.

JERRY

What are you guys, chicken? (flaps arms) Baawk, baawk, baawk.

DAN and GEORGE look at JERRY incredulously.

KEN

You're a little late guys. We're flying the friendly skies.

KEN and JERRY walk off.

GEORGE

At least one of them's crazy, and I'm  
having my doubts about which one it is.

DAN

Come on.

DAN and GEORGE'S exit is hindered by the crowd, beginning to dance  
to the next song.

CUT TO:

EXT. AMPHITHEATER PARKING LOT - AFTERNOON

DAN and GEORGE stand in the parking lot and watch their limousine drive  
off.

GEORGE

Ah, shit. Let's go call a taxi.

They head for a PAY PHONE.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPORT - EARLY EVENING

DAN and GEORGE get out of a TAXI and run inside.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPORT - EARLY EVENING

DAN and GEORGE scan the departure board.

DAN

Gate 33.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPORT - EARLY EVENING

The TWO run up to GATE 33. Through the windows, we see an airplane  
taxiing. DAN runs up to the departure desk.

DAN (cont. to attendant)

When's the next flight to Memphis?

ATTENDANT

Four hours from now, at . . . 11 o'clock.

DAN

Great.

CUT TO:

EXT. HALVERSON'S FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

SANDY rings the doorbell and BRENDA answers the door.

BRENDA

Sandy. To what do I owe this pleasure?

SANDY

For the sake of our kids I think we should talk.

SANDY enters.

CUT TO:

INT. AND EXT. MEMPHIS MONTAGE - NIGHT

We see KEN and JERRY at the MEMPHIS AIRPORT, renting a car, and then pulling up to a 4X4 TRUCK at a construction site. KEN opens up the back and shows JERRY the equipment inside.

KEN

We've got it all here. Pry bars, jacks, a ladder, and dig these . . .

KEN holds up a CAMOUFLAGED SHIRT and TROUSERS.

JERRY

Wow, you do have it all. (pause) What

are we going to do with him?

KEN

I got a body bag. Straight from 'Nam.

KEN and JERRY look at each other for a few moments.

KEN (cont.)

You know, it helps to have friends,  
especially when they owe you, and I  
owe you a lot, Jerry.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL GAME - DAY

KEN'S MEMORY: KEN dashes for a 40 YARD run, knocked out-of-bounds at the 15 YARD LINE. He looks over to the PRETTY BLONDE CHEERLEADER, BRENDA, cheering wildly.

The TEAM huddles. KEN is next to JERRY and GEORGE.

GEORGE

Nice run, Ken.

QUARTERBACK

Alright. Halfback trap right, on 2.  
Go get em', Jer.

They clap hands and break the huddle. JERRY takes the handoff, breaks several tackles, and runs down to the ONE YARD LINE. After the play KEN looks at the wildly cheering crowd, then at the GRANDSTAND.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRANDSTAND - DAY

We see excited CHEERLEADERS, including BRENDA, leaping in front of the standing CROWD.

BRENDA

Yea, Jerry! Go, Eagles.



CUT BACK TO:

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

KEN wears a cold stare on his face as he sees BRENDA and JERRY watching each other.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

PETE and MARGIE are in their new apartment. It is on a hill, with a view. Boxes and paper are strewn across the room. PETE comes up behind MARGIE, unwrapping dishes at the sink, and puts his arms around her.

PETE

Wow, where'd you get all this stuff?

MARGIE

These place settings were my grandmothers. Mom said I might as well take them now.

PETE

That was real good of her. Hey, you want me to make dinner?

MARGIE

You, cook?

PETE

There's a few things you still don't know about me.

MARGIE turns and puts her arms around PETE'S waist.

MARGIE

But there's something I do know.

PETE pulls her closer and they kiss.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEMPHIS AIRPORT - NIGHT

DAN and GEORGE arrive and rent a car. The clock on the airport wall shows TWO-THIRTY A.M.

DAN

We better move it.

GEORGE

Gotcha.

CUT TO:

INT. HALVERSON LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

SANDY is talking with BRENDA.

SANDY

. . . so, I just wanted to let you know where I stood.

BRENDA

Well, thanks for your honesty. I wish that I could hate you, but I don't.

SANDY reaches out her hand to BRENDA, who hugs her instead.

SANDY

Thanks.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRACELAND - NIGHT

KEN and JERRY'S TRUCK stops on the street in back of GRACELAND.

KEN (after a few silent moments)

Well, there he lies, Jerry. Ready to meet your destiny?

JERRY

Ready.

KEN

Let's get moving.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEMPHIS STREETS - NIGHT

DAN and GEORGE race through the streets of MEMPHIS in their rented car.

BACK TO:

EXT. GRACELAND - NIGHT

JERRY stumbles through the woods adjacent to GRACELAND. He is lugging PRY BARS and a LADDER, and pulling a JACK.

JERRY (mumbles to himself)

I wish you woulda told me about Pete movin'.

JERRY trudges a few steps closer to the wall.

JERRY (cont.)

But it's OK now, buddy. Just you and me.

JERRY looks off into the WOODS, as if he has heard something.

CUT TO:

INT. MEMPHIS POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Amid the bustle, The CAMERA DOLLYS in on an OFFICER receiving a call.

OFFICER

What's that? You say someone's trying to break into Graceland? And they're armed? What's your name and address-- Oh, just a concerned citizen? Well, then, thanks for calling.

CUT TO:

INT. 4X4 TRUCK CAB - NIGHT

A HAND at the end of a CAMOUFLAGED ARM hangs up a CELLULAR PHONE.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRACELAND - NIGHT

JERRY is at the WALL. He sets the equipment down and looks off into the woods again. KEN walks up behind him.

KEN

Hey, the wall's this way.

JERRY

I just thought I saw something in there.

KEN

This is no time to start seeing shit.

They set up the ladder on the WALL.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRACELAND - NIGHT

A POLICE CRUISER pulls up in front of GRACELAND. An OFFICER, FRED, gets out of the car and walks up to the GATE.

FRED (to GATEKEEPER)

We got a report of a disturbance out here. Seen anything?

GATEKEEPER

No such luck. It's dead all over.

FRED

Probably just another crank call. Might keep your ears open, anyway.

GATEKEEPER

Thanks, good to know you boys are watching out for us. Fred, you're a cheap date.

FRED

Sure it wasn't you that made that call, old buddy? What's the matter, lonely?

They both laugh as FRED gets back in his CRUISER.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRACELAND - NIGHT

DAN and GEORGE pull up behind the 4X4.

GEORGE

They must be at the wall.

The TWO jump out of the car and run into the WOODS.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRACELAND - NIGHT

KEN and JERRY are at the WALL.

KEN

OK, we go in two minutes.

JERRY

Gotta smoke?

KEN smiles and takes a pack from his shirt pocket and hands it to JERRY.

KEN

Here, it's my last one. I'll share  
it with you.

They pass the cigarette, solemnly. The CAMERA closes on KEN'S FACE.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

KEN'S MEMORY: The TEAM is huddling.

QUARTERBACK

Great run, Jer. Let's punch it in.  
Halfback sweep right . . .

KEN (interrupting)

Hey, it's my play.

QUARTERBACK

Next one. You block now. We're one  
yard from the championship. Let's  
do it, on 'go.'

The TEAM lines up. KEN, still pissed off, looks at the GRANDSTAND, then JERRY, and then lines up next to him. In SLOW MOTION, the ball is snapped and handed off to JERRY.

KEN and GEORGE are leading the blocking as the play sweeps the right. A huge DEFENSIVE TACKLE is heading towards JERRY. At the last moment, KEN pulls back his block.

The TACKLE crushes JERRY as he crosses the GOAL LINE. The tumultuous ROAR of the CROWD subsides as we see JERRY on the ground, grabbing his knee.

DISSOLVE BACK TO:

EXT. GRACELAND - NIGHT

JERRY and KEN finish their cigarette.

KEN (cont.)

You gonna be alright?

JERRY

Yeah, I'm fine.

KEN

I'll go start the fireworks.

KEN pats him on the shoulder and leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRACELAND - NIGHT

FRED, in his CRUISER, pulls up behind the RENTAL CAR and the TRUCK, and looks at them suspiciously.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRACELAND - NIGHT

JERRY waits at the foot of the LADDER, loaded with equipment. He looks at the top of the WALL.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL GAME - DAY

JERRY'S MEMORY: He sees himself running with the ball towards the END ZONE. At the GOAL LINE, he falls in pain.

DISSOLVE BACK TO:

EXT. GRACELAND - NIGHT

JERRY looks towards the WOODS, rubbing his knee. We see a faint glowing LIGHT in the distance. He drops the equipment and walks to the LIGHT.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRACELAND - NIGHT

DAN and GEORGE are running through the TREES. DAN stops, looking deep

into the WOODS. We see the faint glowing LIGHT in the distance. Suddenly the night sky explodes with FIREWORKS.

GEORGE

Ken's started the diversion.

DAN looks towards the LIGHT and then to the WALL.

DAN

Let's get Jerry and get out of here.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRACELAND - NIGHT

Two more POLICE CRUISERS pull up to FRED'S CAR. The OFFICERS, heavily armed, briefly talk to FRED, and run into the WOODS.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRACELAND - NIGHT

JERRY walks into a copse of TREES. As he enters, we hear fireworks, sirens and people shouting. The sounds diminish as the light grows brighter. At a clearing in the center, JERRY stands, blinded by the light.

VOICE

Psst, over here.

JERRY turns and sees a shimmering apparition. It is ELVIS, standing next to a large stump.

ELVIS (cont.)

Come on over and sit down.

ELVIS motions to the stump.

JERRY

Is it really you?



ELVIS

A lot more than that dime store imitation you saw at Wanda's.

JERRY

Yeah, wasn't he something?

ELVIS

Not really something to believe in, though.

JERRY walks over and they sit down together.

JERRY (after a silent beat)

Gotta smoke?

ELVIS

No. Smoking's not good for you, Jer. There's people that aren't good for you, either.

JERRY muses on this for a few moments.

JERRY

You mean Ken?

ELVIS

Think about it, Jerry. What do you see?

JERRY (long pause)

Yeah, I know what you mean. A lie is a lie, no matter how good you tell it.

ELVIS

And big lies grow from little ones.  
Before you know it, you can't tell  
the difference between a lie and the  
truth.

JERRY

Yeah, and you're left holdin' the  
salami.

ELVIS

Before you can see the truth in others,  
you have to face the truth about your-  
self.

ELVIS lets this sink in. A look of foreboding crosses JERRY'S face.

ELVIS (cont.)

Jerry, Molly's gone from the world  
you know. It's time you laid her to  
rest.

JERRY'S emotions overcome him and he starts to cry. ELVIS lets him  
go for a few moments and then lays a ghostly hand on his shoulder.

ELVIS (cont.)

Believe me, I know just how you feel.

JERRY (between sobs)

It just hurts so bad.

ELVIS

And it won't get any better until you  
stop numbing yourself and start to  
feel again.

JERRY

I can't make it, I'm just not good  
enough.

ELVIS

You are good enough, Jerry.

JERRY'S sobbing slows.

JERRY

What did you mean, numbing myself?

ELVIS

Alcohol, Jer. Everything's OK when you're high, but it's all there waiting for you when you come down. You know, if you stop drinking, you just might get your self-respect back. And that's the start to getting your life back together. You need to go on the wagon, for you, and for all those you love.

JERRY really breaks down now.

JERRY

How can I ever make things up to Brenda, and Pete?

ELVIS

Love is the answer. You're surrounded by it. Your family, your true friends, and God's love. If you let it into your life, it can work miracles.

JERRY

You mean it's not too late?

ELVIS

It's never too late.

JERRY stops crying and looks at ELVIS with red eyes.

JERRY (after a long beat)

I'm gonna try.

ELVIS

You'll do it. (pause) I know a way  
you can patch things up with Brenda.

JERRY

How's that?

ELVIS looks both ways and then cupping his hand to JERRY'S ear, whispers something. JERRY'S eyes get big and he starts to smile.

JERRY (cont.)

Wow, thanks . . . thanks a lot.

JERRY shakes ELVIS'S hand and ELVIS stands up.

JERRY (cont.)

Where you going?

ELVIS

I've gotta go visit a little ol' lady  
in Cleveland. Oh, by the way. One  
more thing.

JERRY

Are you gonna tell me I don't need you  
anymore, so I won't be seeing you again?

ELVIS

No, Jerry, it's your breath. Here,  
try these.

ELVIS tosses JERRY a roll of mints. The label reads 'ANGEL MINTS.'

JERRY

Hey, can you get these down here?

ELVIS

Probably at Walgreens by now.

ELVIS looks over at a seemingly disheartened JERRY. He walks over to him and takes the SILK SCARF from around his neck.

ELVIS (cont.)

Here. This will keep the wind off your neck.

ELVIS wraps the iridescent SCARF around JERRY'S neck. As he does so, it transforms into the real world.

JERRY

Wow! I wish I had something I could give to you.

ELVIS

Just be cool, man. Be very cool.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRACELAND - NIGHT

KEN is running through the WOODS on the other side of GRACELAND. He lights a ROCKET and runs off.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRACELAND - NIGHT

TWO POLICEMEN, heavily armed, are tracking KEN.

POLICEMAN #1

There goes another. That way!

They run off.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRACELAND - NIGHT

GEORGE, surrounded by shouting voices, climbs up a TREE. TWO POLICEMEN come over and stand under the TREE.

POLICEMAN #2

Hey, you see something move over  
this way?

POLICEMAN #3

No, but I thought I heard something.

The CAMERA TILTS up the TREE to GEORGE. The BRANCH he is on is breaking.

POLICEMAN #2 (o.c.)

Hey, what's that?

The BRANCH breaks and GEORGE falls on the TWO POLICEMEN, knocking them out.

GEORGE

Oh, shit. Look what I've done now.

He runs off into the WOODS.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRACELAND - NIGHT

JERRY walks through the WOODS away from the the madness. He is radiant.  
DAN runs up to him.

DAN

There you are! You OK?

JERRY

Never been better. I just talked with  
Elvis.

DAN (rolling his eyes)

Come again?

JERRY

No, man. I really did. He was right  
there in those trees.

DAN looks at the TREES where he had seen the LIGHT earlier. After  
a beat, he turns and looks at JERRY.

DAN

I don't care how you did it, I'm just  
glad you're alright. Come on, this  
way.

DAN grabs JERRY'S arm, and leads him away from GRACELAND. A beat after  
they leave, TWO POLICEMEN run into the area they just vacated.

POLICEMAN #4

No one over this way. Let's go over  
where the action is.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRACELAND - NIGHT

KEN is running silently through the WOODS, dodging all obstacles  
smoothly. Through a break in the TREES, we see a CAR parked down the  
same street as the 4X4. KEN smiles as he runs. He stops smiling when  
he finds JERRY and DAN walking by the CAR.

KEN (to JERRY)

What's going on? Why aren't you in-  
side?

DAN

The party's over, Ken. I don't know  
what your game is, but we're not play-

ing any more.

JERRY (smiling)

I saw him, man. I talked with him.

KEN

You sniveling little chicken-shit maggot.

KEN pushes JERRY.

KEN (cont.)

You let me down. You've always let me down. I was the best, but you always got the fuckin' glory. You even got Brenda. Bastard!

DAN jumps between KEN and JERRY.

DAN

Cool off. We're getting out of here. And if you don't want to make things any worse, you'll shut up.

KEN

You little shit . . .

KEN hits DAN in the jaw, and sends him reeling. JERRY jumps at KEN and they fall on the ground, wrestling. They roll around for a few moments, until KEN ends up on top of JERRY. He cocks his fist above him, about to smash JERRY in the face, when his arm is caught from behind by GEORGE, who puts him in a HAMMERLOCK and holds him fast.

GEORGE

Joke's over, Ken. It's not funny anymore. Just to set the record straight, you never had a chance with Brenda. She saw through your bullshit before any of us did.



GEORGE shoves KEN to the side. JERRY gets up and is flanked by DAN and GEORGE.

JERRY

I'm sorry you feel the way you do.  
This must have been eating at you for  
years. But you're history. And no  
friend of mine.

The THREE stare at KEN, who realizes the game is over.

JERRY (cont.)

'Bye, Ken.

JERRY, DAN and GEORGE turn and walk away. The CAMERA closes on KEN'S tortured face.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRACELAND - NIGHT

The THREE are walking.

DAN (to JERRY)

Want to take the car?

JERRY

Naw. It's a nice night for a walk.

They walk off down the STREET.

SLOW FADE TO:

INT. OFFICE - DAY SOMETIME in the FUTURE.

JERRY is in his OFFICE, when DAVE walks in.

JERRY (cont.)

Hi, Dave. What can I do for you?

Behind DAVE, we see the rest of the OFFICE STAFF standing at the doorway, watching. DAVE pulls a PLAQUE from behind his back.

DAVE

More of the same. I'd like to present  
you the award for "Most Valuable Adjuster."

EVERYONE CLAPS and CHEERS.

JERRY

Gee, thanks. What's this mean?

JERRY points to the LATIN INSCRIPTION on the PLAQUE, which reads:  
"Vobiscum ad Profundus."

ADJUSTER #1

It means "Best Bullshitter."

EVERYBODY LAUGHS.

JERRY

From you, I'll consider that a compli-  
ment.

EVERYBODY LAUGHS and CHEERS again.

CUT TO:

EXT. HALVERSON'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

JERRY parks in his DRIVEWAY, next to the beautifully restored 1957  
CHEVROLET. JERRY pats the CHEVY as he walks by it and into the house,  
where he finds BRENDA, PETE and MARGIE in the KITCHEN.

MARGIE

Hi, Dad.

JERRY kisses MARGIE on the CHEEK.

PETE

Hey, Dad. Got your skybox passes for  
Saturday.

PETE hands JERRY an envelope, grinning.

JERRY

Thanks, Son.

BRENDA

George and Shirley are going to meet us there. We're riding with Dan and Katy.

JERRY gives BRENDA a peck on the LIPS.

JERRY

You kid's staying for dinner?

MARGIE

We'd like to, but we've got a class tonight.

MARGIE and PETE look at BRENDA.

JERRY

When did you start back to school?  
And you weren't gonna tell me?

PETE

Dad, tonight's the first night . . .

PETE and MARGIE

. . . of our Lamaze class.

They ALL SMILE as JERRY slowly understands.

JERRY

You mean I'm going to be a grandpa?

Hooowhee!

BRENDA (to PETE)

You be real careful on Saturday.

PETE

It'll be the quickest, most careful  
win you've ever seen.

MARGIE

Let's go, lightnin'.

BRENDA

Bye, kids. See you Saturday.

JERRY

Pete, why don't you carry her to the  
car?

They LAUGH.

JERRY (cont. shouting after them)

You be real careful with my grand . . .  
kid.

He turns and looks at BRENDA, an awestruck look on his face.

PETE and MARGIE

We will. Bye, Mom, Dad.

They exit. BRENDA looks back at JERRY before turning to finish loading  
the dishwasher.

JERRY dwells on everything for a few moments, then walks through the  
house to the ELVIS SHRINE. He enters and stands in the middle of the  
ROOM, looking around.

His eyes FOCUS on the many SOUVENIRS, finally settling on the PHOTOGRAPH

of the GANG in front of a building with a sign that reads, 'SUN RECORDS.'  
BRENDA walks in and puts her arms around him.

BRENDA

Penny for your thoughts.

JERRY (sighs)

Going once, going twice . . .

He turns and holds his wife close.

JERRY (cont.)

. . . sold, to the woman with the burning  
love . . .

JERRY holds his wife at arms length, looks her up and down and winks.

JERRY (cont.)

. . . and the magic sweater. Hooweee!

They kiss tenderly as the CAMERA FOCUSES on the FRAMED SCARF, GLOWING  
on the wall behind them.

The End.

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