

Misfits

by
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Adapted from the short story, *A Good Man is Hard to Find*, by
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INT. THE BLAIR HOUSE - LIVINGROOM - NIGHT

TIME PERIOD: EARLY 1950s. United States Southeast.

An old Black and White RCA TV SET shows: a MAN(40s), seated, speaking into a microphone.

Pulsing FLASHES and other MICROPHONES at the frame's bottom edge suggest a mob of people watching him-- recording him-- in an exclusive, news interview.

He wears HANDCUFFS-- an animal caged... His gaze distant, evoking a defensive aloofness. And behind his reddened eyes, a twisted, eternal wisdom ticking away... counting itself down to the next slaughter.

He gathers loose strands of thought until:

MAN ON TV

Oh boy... Have to admit I am a rascal myself. The minute I saw her, I s'pose, all I would think about was getting on top that and chew it up like a great big grizzly bear, and not come up for air 'til it smelled like spring...

(pulls his hair back)

... You think I'm disgusting?... By God, I do too. And that's how the human animal is made. And, uh... I guess God put those feelin' there to get us. Yes. Mebbe to entrap us, but... a man IS God's handi-work, and we're created onto his image and that includes all the brains, beauty, anger, lust, piss and dung and all that goes with it. And without all that almighty LUST from God's creations that church folkers dare to call a sin, there wouldn't BE any body around in the first place. Nobody'd exist. And the whole plan, if there's a plan at all, would turn to dust, and dust unto dust, and forever, that's it. Amen.

(laughs to himself)

So, uh, if the churchly folk, y'know, get their way, then, uh... I think it'll be the pigs that inherit the Earth.

(MORE)

MAN ON TV (cont'd)
 Because, believe me, as long as
 there's enough to eat and enough to
 screw, then the pigs'll do God's
 real plan and be completely
 GRATEFUL for it--

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
 How many times are we going to hear
 this man use obscenities?

OLDER WOMAN (O.S.)
 He's a philistine, Edna. Man of
 impulses and malice aforethought.
 Some are just born antennas of the
 devil.

MAN ON TV
 ... They'll even do it in the mud.
 Matter of fact, pigs might be the
 ones created in God's image anyway
 for all we know. And we the
 swine... Good Lord. Can you imagine
 that?

Hold on the Man's gaze, barely hiding a deranged amusement of
 it all.

ANNOUNCER (ON TV
 Coming up, a preview of the next
Hour of Reason. But first...

The TV picture cuts to black, then it blares a BRIGHTLY LIT
 COMMERCIAL. Black and white IMAGES of palm trees, sandy
 beaches and a wholesome family with beaming smiles standing
 arm-in-arm together. The ocean in the background:

ANNOUNCER (ON TV) (cont'd)
 Remember... if it's all about
 sunshine, tropical adventure and
 fun-- think Florida, the place to
 be!

The patriarch, a blissful, LINEBACKER of a MAN, sits out on
 the beach. Suntan lotion slicks the nose. Frosty mug of BEER
 in his hand.

LINEBACKER
 (euphoric)
 Florida has EVERYTHING!

Pulling away from the TV set. Swish pan to:

THE REST OF THE LIVINGROOM

Sitting on a sofa, the OLDER WOMAN'S VOICE is THE GRANDMOTHER. Late 60s. She's overweight with a patrician's nose and fleshy cheeks. Bright, bulging eyes. She's half watching TV, half reading a newspaper.

GRANDMOTHER

And you can have Florida. I hear the ultra-violet rays give you a set a shingles a Coney Island freakshow'd cry mercy over and that's the god's honest truth of it all.

A SNORT of disapproval comes from BAILEY. Late 40s. Bald. Nervous tics. Clothes hang off him as if he were forged from hanger wires. He sits at the edge of his chair, bent over the orange sports section of the NEWSPAPER.

BAILEY

... I know what you're doing.

GRANDMOTHER

I have no designs. I merely offer to you facts.

BAILEY

Which originate from your psychotic idea of an opinion.

CHUCKLING at the comment is JOHN WESLEY, a stocky kid with glasses and a buzz cut laying on the floor, reading the comic section of the newspaper.

GRANDMOTHER

(to Bailey)

You're stuck on Florida because going to East Tennessee means you'll have to see your second cousin.

BAILEY

That's a heap a hee-haw.

Grandmother skims the newspaper. Her eyes light up on:

Big Headline in the NEWSPAPER: **MISFIT MISSING**

GRANDMOTHER

(reading)

Now look here. Here he is again, Bailey.

She rattles the newspaper on Bailey's head.

GRANDMOTHER (cont'd)
 See here? Read this... The same
 fellow from television just now,
 calls himself The Misfit and now
 he's a loose from the Federal Pen
 and headed toward Florida.

BAILEY
 That's what the TV just said.

GRANDMOTHER
 Alright, and you read here what it
 says he did to these people. Just
 you read it. I wouldn't take my
 children in any direction with a
 criminal like that a loose in it. I
 couldn't answer to my conscience if
 I did.

Bailey ignores her. Grandmother turns to plead her case to:

Bailey's WIFE, the Woman's Voice, is EDNA. 38. A wide,
 innocent face. She wears slacks. A green handkerchief covers
 her head. She sits on a sofa feeding her BABY apricots from a
 jar. Her movements more mechanical and proper than tender.

GRANDMOTHER (cont'd)
 The children have been to Florida
 before. You ought to take them
 somewhere else for a change so they
 would see different parts of the
 world and be broad. They never have
 been to east Tennessee.

JOHN WESLEY
 If you don't wanna go to Florida,
 why dontcha stay at home?

Next to John Wesley is his older sister by one or two years,
 JUNE STAR. Blond hair with short pig tails and a pin of a
 nose, she reads from the newspaper's comic section.

JUNE STAR
 (without looking up)
 She wouldn't stay home to be queen
 for a day.

GRANDMOTHER
 Oh? And what would you do if this
 fellow, The Misfit, caught you?

JOHN WESLEY
 I'd smack his face--

JUNE STAR

(without looking up)

She wouldn't stay at home for a million bucks. Afraid she'd miss something... She has to go everywhere we go.

GRANDMOTHER

All right, Miss... Just remember that the next time you want me to curl your hair.

JUNE STAR

(without looking up)

... My hair is naturally curly.

BAILEY

Would you quit harrasin' the children, Mama? I don't need you gettin' her or anybody else all riled up.

GRANDMOTHER

I'm trying to make it so we all have the most enjoyable trip possible. The last thing I want to do is rile everyone up-- and I hate it when you use that word, 'rile' anyways... But it's a fool's blunder to wander out into country where a bonafied misanthrope is out his head, runnin' rampant, no doubt, in a mangy backwater state like Florida.

Pitty Sing, a furry Siberian CAT under the sofa, belts out an agreeing MEOW!

JOHN WESLEY/ JUNE STAR

Can we bring Pitty Sing?

GRANDMOTHER

Of course.

BAILEY

Of course not. We are not arriving at a motel with your cat like a gaggle of gypsies. Besides, this is also a business trip and I aim to keep it as business-like as possible.

GRANDMOTHER

Aw, Bailey Boy, she's going to miss me much too much.

BAILEY

(agitated)

Cats don't miss anything. 'Cept for food.

GRANDMOTHER

My goodness. And if he brushes up against the gas burner and asphyxiates himself?

Bailey frustrated. His breathing intensifying.

Edna eyes her husband.

EDNA

(stern warning at Bailey)

Easy... with the baby listening.

BAILEY

(settling down)

Mama... Everyone's gonna be packed and ready to depart at seven-thirty... It will be-- it sure as all hell better be, a relaxing family excursion, plus a couple stops to sell off the last of our new stock. It will be *relaxing* and it will be to *Florida*.

GRANDMOTHER

This is all so you can actually make a dime for us, for a change, off some hussy-raised hill-billy in gator boots since you are unable, apparently, to make a dime off any distinguished land owners in East Tennessee.

BAILEY

You can go to hell if you're gonna throw that out there with the children here.

GRANDMOTHER

(salting the wound)

Is it embarrassin', Bailey Boy?

A burst of displaced anger and Bailey THROWS the sports section at John Wesley's head.

BAILEY

Go throw that out along with the
rest of the garbage in the kitchen
(to both kids)
and make sure your suitcases are
open on your beds so your mother
can inspect them when she comes in.

A quick beat and John Wesley hasn't budged. Bailey JUMPS up and STOMPS his foot on the ground as if John Wesley could get the bad end of the next one.

BAILEY (cont'd)

Get your butt to tha--

John Wesley scrambles up and runs off to his duties.

INT. TWINS' BEDROOM. NIGHT

June Star and John Wesley kneeling in prayer at their separate twin beds. Two smaller knapsacks neatly packed up at the foot of their respective beds.

The bedroom door is open. Outside, Bailey listens in on the children's prayer. He stands just outside the room, believing the children don't know he's there, but his SHADOW throws his outline against the adjoining wall into John Wesley's sight.

JOHN WESLEY

...And thank you, Lord for the help
on the spelling test, since I did
so well on it.

Bailey leaves. John Wesley watches his father's shadow disappears. June Star's softly giggling the whole time.

JOHN WESLEY (cont'd)

Just kidding, I got a C minus. But
to get down to brass tacks, dear
blesséd lord, I don't think I'll
ever really need spelling. The man
who cleans the classroom says
spelling's for women and
typewriters and he knows a lotta
stuff because they give him the
keys to everything... even though
he smells like pee.

June Star spits out a laugh.

JUNE STAR

You're crazy.

Bailey reappears, still believing he's undetected.

John Wesley sees his shadow. His speech alters to a deceptive, angelic sweetness.

JOHN WESLEY

And the same for the poor, dear
lord, who deserve our love. May
they cherish a peaceful night
sleeping under your stars...

Appeased but skeptical, Bailey inches away. Once his shadow is out of sight:

JOHN WESLEY (cont'd)

And actually, now that I think
about it... do somethin' to make
June Star's farts smell more
unhorrible, please, Lord, because
they are swift and deadly
predators, Lord.

June Star, a little miffed, still belts out another loud burst of laughter.

JUNE STAR

Hey!

Bailey rushes back out. He barrels into their room.

BAILEY

Goddamnit, John Wesley, are you
bein' fresh now? You better drop
this diabolic attitude right now,
young mista. Or I'll snuff you one!
Good night!

The kids kneeling. Giggling. Barely able to control it.

INT. PARENT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bailey stomps in. Edna clips a suitcase shut and lugs it to the ground. Her hair a mess with rag curls. She wears an oversized button-down with just her panties on.

BAILEY

Your son is on the cusp of disaster
if he keeps going down the path
he's going down.

Edna takes out her earrings.

EDNA

I think that they're anxious about tomorrow. John Wesley loves to act out when he's anxious.

She places her jewelry on a dresser top. Tension seems to thicken.

BAILEY

... I know it's not-- everything ain't one hundred percent ideal, but, for me, there's no choice. It's gotta be down there and it's gotta be me. Us. And then O'Donnel... honey, I just know it, he's gonna force upon them those newer planes and they'll be too fast, dammint, Edna... and they'll blame the dust, not the plane, and that means they blame me and that'll put the brakes on us, Edna... So, O'Donnel-- I gotta get the drop on'em. That's all... I gotta get the drop on'em. And the only place I can do it is in Florida. And we can stop at a few farms, prob'ly, along the way, see what we can't unload. And if that doesn't work, then I have no idea what the hell we're gonna do.

Edna looking over Bailey, considering his desperation.

EDNA

(comforting)

... Well, we'll always need to grow food and there'll always be bugs there to butt in on everything... But it's gotta be that something *that* inevitable... our little slice has to be in there *somewhere*. Right? I think insecticides is the business of the future.

BAILEY

They're Bio-cides. The term is bio-cides.

EDNA

Okie-dokie... Even better.

By now, Bailey's sitting at the edge of the bed. Edna takes his watch off...

EDNA (cont'd)
 Though I will say, and I don't care
 what you wanna call it, bringing
 the stuff along with us in the car,
 the same car our children will be
 in...

She takes off his shoes.

EDNA (cont'd)
 Well... it could be dangerous.

BAILEY
 Edna... We ain't gotta choice. It's
 up to me. We sell the last of this
 test brand or we starve'n die... So
 pick. Starve'n die, or lift our
 butts up, as opposed to waitin'
 around here like we been doin'...
 take that darn Buick down to the
 sunshine state and convince
 everybody to spend they money on
 dust and instead of aeroplanes'n
 we'll be shootin' straight--that's
 long term... Short term, is offin'
 that last bit in the car to square
 us off for maybe the rest of
 summer. That'd be flippin'
 fantastic.

INT. GRANDMOTHER'S BEDROOM - MEANWHILE

Tucked into her tight, full-sized bed with Pitty Sing
 sleeping at her side, Grandmother looks up blankly towards
 the ceiling, her big eyes barely blinking, and the truth is,
 she hears everything from the next room through the walls:

BAILEY (O.S.)
 (through the wall)
 ... The American Dream runs on
 risk, reward, moxie and, hell,
 mebbe a li'l sugar too. But what
 that sunuvabitch doesn't run on, is
 an empty stomach, honey...

A beat. Bailey's ranting continuing, but reduced now to a
 murmur under the PURRRRRING of Pitty Sing. Grandmother
 silently listens on.

FADE OUT

AND FADE IN ON:

NEXT MORNING - GRANDMOTHER'S BEDROOM

Grandmother looks at her reflection in a mirror. Fully dressed to the nines.

She brushes a lacy cuff.

She pins a purple sachet with cloth violets to her neckline.

Finally, she places a navy blue straw hat with a small, precise collection of dried wildflowers on her head and steps back to take her whole figure in. An exhale of satisfaction--confidence. She knows she's a lady.

EXT. FRONT YARD AND DRIVEWAY. MORNING - LATER

An immaculate 1952 Buick parked in the driveway, and inside is:

GRANDMA

alone, back seat center, ready to go. Her legs in nylons resting next to a big black VALISE on a basket with PITTY SING'S TAIL dangling out, twirling around. She lifts the valise, opens the basket lid. PITTY SING is curled up inside. Cramped but cozy.

GRANDMOTHER

You be a good girl down there,
Pitty. Bailey'll flip you right
through the movin' window if you
give'em good reason. I'll pull you
out once we're far enough along,
when he can't do a thing bout it
but whine.

HOUSE FRONT DOOR

Swings open. June Star and John Wesley racing out with stuffed knapsacks on. They're followed by:

Edna carrying the Baby. Finally, Bailey comes out struggling with two bulky suitcases. He's arguing with Edna about something trivial.

FACING THE BUICK HEAD ON

Grandmother dead center in the back seat. Both passenger side doors swing open. June Star and John Wesley get in, sitting on either side of Grandma. Edna settles into the passenger seat as Bailey pops the trunk up...

The car drops under heavy weight... The trunk closes. Bailey gets in and adjusts himself as the driver.

GRANDMOTHER (cont'd)
My goodness, it is a quarter until nine. We'll never make it anywhere before sundown at this rate.

As the car starts:

BAILEY
(warning)
Too early, Momma. Do not start yet 'fore our tires have even rolled off the driveway.

JUNE STAR
Daddy was doin' his business for so long in the bathroom, we're lucky any of us escaped alive.

EDNA
(reprimanding)
June Star!

JUNE STAR
But it was awful!

GRANDMOTHER
Oh, calm down. It's not as if yours smell like chamomile.

BAILEY
Does everybody have everything? We're not gonna make any emergency stops so... double check your stuff.

JOHN WESLEY
We're ready already, Freddy.

Bailey shifts the car into gear.

BAILEY
(doubting)
Okay...

As the car slowly pulls out the driveway:

GRANDMOTHER
Bailey, what's the odometer read?

She takes a pen and scrap paper out of a coat pocket.

BAILEY

What for?

GRANDMOTHER

So we can know how many miles we've gone when we get back.

JOHN WESLEY

Think we'll go over a thousand miles?

GRANDMOTHER

Round trip total, it'll be well over one thousand.

JOHN WESLEY

(for confirmation)

Daddy?

BAILEY

... Probably bout a thousand sounds right.

GRANDMOTHER

It'll be a good day for driving at least. Not too hot or cold.

DRIVING - LATER

John Wesley and June Star both engaged in their comics.

Edna is fast asleep as is the baby.

A road sign speeds by: **SPEED LIMIT 55.**

GRANDMOTHER (cont'd)

Bailey, your foot is made of lead. It says fifty-five miles on the nose there on that sign, and I know you've got the jump on that number by over fifteen miles per hour. State officers will get you from behind any number of what-have-you's and I know you'll not see them in time.

BAILEY

I'm not going any faster then those other-- some of these speedsters are leaving me in the dust if you wanna have it plain and simple. I'll bet they get nabbed before I do--

GRANDMOTHER
 (interrupting)
 Look! Stone Mountain!

Bailey doesn't seem to care. The kids don't look up from their comics.

JOHN WESLEY
 (sarcastic, without
 looking up)
 You don't say... The real thing?

The Georgia landscape rolls by outside. Lush trees. Popping hills.

JOHN WESLEY (cont'd)
 Let's go through Georgia fast so we won't have to look at it much.

GRANDMOTHER
 If I were a good little boy, I wouldn't talk about my native state that way. They've got their own characters. Tennessee has the mountains and Georgia has the hills.

JOHN WESLEY
 Tennessee is just a hillbilly dumping ground... And Georgia's a lousy state too.

JUNE STAR
 You said it.

The Grandmother scans the terrain outside. Thinking. Frowning. Then, folding her thin, veiny fingers:

GRANDMOTHER
 In my time, children were more respectful of their native states and their parents and everything else... People did right then--
 (pointing out the window)
 Oh, look at the cute little pickaninny!

OUTSIDE

A small African-American BOY with an oversized button-down and no pants posted up by the door of a wooden shack. He stares at the passing car.

GRANDMOTHER (cont'd)
Wouldn't that make a picture now?

June Star, Grandmother and John Wesley all turn, looking out the back window to:

The small Boy, still staring. He waves.

JUNE STAR
(waving back)
He doesn't have any britches on.

GRANDMOTHER
He probably doesn't have any.
(turning back around)
Little niggers in the country don't have things like we do, but they're no less interesting... If I could paint, I'd paint that picture.

June Star and John Wesley turn around.

JUNE STAR
(to John Wesley)
Can I get the Captain Marvel ones?
I'm tired of Little Lulu.

JOHN WESLEY
Captain Marvel's a boy comic.
Lulu's a girl comic.

June Star gets a twinkle in her eye.

JUNE STAR
Oh. I didn't know that stopping a bank robbery was in girl comics.

JOHN WESLEY
You're lying. A bank robbery in Little Lulu?

JUNE STAR
John Wesley just called me a liar.

GRANDMOTHER
June Star, do you think we can't hear what everybody's saying?

JOHN WESLEY
(to June Star)
How does she stop it?

A beat. John Wesley's interest growing.

JOHN WESLEY (cont'd)
... Guns?

A beat. June Star nods.

JOHN WESLEY (cont'd)
Really?

June Star flips through her Little Lulu comic, feigning amusement.

JUNE STAR
Really.

John Wesley throws his stack of Captain Marvel comics to June Star.

JOHN WESLEY
Here.

June Star passes over the Lulu comics. John Wesley flips through one comic... Then another...

JOHN WESLEY (cont'd)
Hey...

Then another... His irritation mounting.

JOHN WESLEY (cont'd)
You damn liar--

Grandmother BOPS John Wesley on the side of his head with her knuckles. He rubs his head, smarting.

GRANDMOTHER
John Wesley, enough!... You just got bamboozled and you should know your sister can do it with the best of'em. Now, there's a boy. Lick your wounds and figure out how you might end up the smarter one for the next go around.

June Star reads her Captain Marvel comic. Silent. Smug.

JUNE STAR
... There's a boy, John WEASLEY.

June Star highly amused with herself. John Wesley sulks.

EXT. RUN DOWN FARM - DAY

From inside the Buick, we look back at the closing trunk, revealing Bailey with a large brown, cylindrically shaped CONTAINERS. He carries the container up to:

A FARM HOUSE

square, white, single story. It's centered amidst an array of grain silos, bent and broken horse stables and a pair of faded black barns. Bailey has walked to the door. He knocks on it.

BUICK

The Grandmother, bouncing the Baby on her knee, watches:

BAILEY

standing at the front door. Waiting. Holding the heavy cylinder. Finally, he hefts down the cylinders and shakes hands with the FARM OWNER standing in his open doorway.

BUICK

The Grandmother bounces the beaming Baby on her knee. Kisses his forehead. Rolls her eyes, clown-like, for the Baby. She screws up her mouth and sticks her powdered, leathery face into the Baby's face. The Baby's smile vanishes into a bland facade, perhaps a mils expression of fear.

BAILEY

Walking back to the car. Shaking his head at Edna. Dejected. Still holding the container of pesticide.

DRIVING - LATER

The Buick cruises down the highway.

A number of hand-painted signs staked into the side of the road. Grandma chimes in with a comment for each one.

One reads: ***ARE YOU SAVED by Lord Jesus Christ. DO YOU KNOW IT by God's Word and Spirit. DO YOU SHOW IT by a Godly Life???***

GRANDMOTHER

And for once you were full of
darkness, but now you have light
from the Lord. So live as people of
light! That's the Ephesians, five
verse eight.

ANOTHER SIGN, tall and water damaged. Lights meant for its nighttime illumination have been broken out. Missing Letters. It reads: **BOOGER HOLLOW TABERNACLE. DRANKING IS N_T TH ANSWER.**

Another sign reads: **HAMBUGARS!**

GRANDMOTHER (cont'd)
(shaking her head)
Ham-BUG-ars... Amazing... And as it stands, the closer you get to Florida, the less literate the world becomes.

BAILEY
(pointing out)
There you go, mama.

Passing sign that reads: **Go To Church-- It Pays!**

JOHN WESLEY
That's the one that gets it. I'd go to church without gripin' if I got money for it.

GRANDMOTHER
It's not talking about paying in dimes and quarters, John Wesley--

A river rolls by, its water at low level. Layers of blue hills bump up in the background.

GRANDMOTHER (cont'd)
(pointing out window)
Look at the beautiful purple streaks off the red clay.

DRIVING - LATER

Bailey's eyes steady on the road. John Wesley, June Star and Edna asleep. Grandmother's eyes are glued to the road.

GRANDMOTHER (cont'd)
Look. A graveyard. It's an ugly one too.

OUTSIDE

A cotton field with a fenced-in island of six tombstones sticking out like skeleton teeth in the middle.

BAILEY

It's not ugly. It's just what it is. It doesn't need to be fancy. As long as the holes'r deep enough. Hell.

John Wesley stirs.

JOHN WESLEY

(sleep talking)

... Where's the plantation?

GRANDMOTHER

Plantation?... Ha! Gone with the wind, Jay Wesley.

Grandmother affectionately brushes John Wesley's head as he snoozes back off to sleep.

DRIVING - LATER

June Star looking concerned out the window.

JUNE STAR

... I'm hungry.

Bailey checks his watch. The hands say: **12:55**

BAILEY

Alright.

(looking at Edna)

Take it out.

Edna reaches down between her legs, removing a box with napkins on the top.

DRIVING - LATER

June Star pops the last morsel of sandwich into her mouth, a huge Spanish olive pinched in her fingers.

The Grandmother munches on the last half of her sandwich, an olive tooth-picked onto the top slice.

John Wesley, finished with his food, hungrily eyes the Grandmother's olive.

JOHN WESLEY

Can I have your olive?

GRANDMOTHER

You may not touch my olive, sir.

JOHN WESLEY
Um-hmm... June Star?

June Star pops the olive in her mouth. Chews.

JUNE STAR
(to John Wesley)
... I'm sorry?

JOHN WESLEY
(sulking)
Whatta wisenheimer.

DRIVING - LATER

June Star rolls down her window, crumples up her paper bag and reels back to toss it out the window.

GRANDMOTHER
Do not think about tossin' that
garbage out the window.

JUNE STAR
Aw, it'll make the car smell. Daddy
always does it.

GRANDMOTHER
Well, when I'm in the car, you act
like a cultivated and sophisticated
young woman, striving to work above
your father's base animal
instincts.

JUNE STAR
(after a thought)
... Can I just throw a little bit
out at a time? That's what Mama
does.

GRANDMOTHER / EDNA
No! / June Star!

EXT. GEORGIA PEACH TREE FARM - LATER

The Buick pulls to a stop in front of another SPANNING FARM PROPERTY. The lines of budding trees into the horizon suggest this is a PEACH TREE nursery and farm. By the road in front of it, a square, single-storied wood cabin.

INT. BUICK. CONTINUOUS.

Bailey puts the car in park

BAILEY

John Wesley. C'mon out with me. I'm bringing you with. Should give me some credibility and it might teach you how people in the real world have to make money.

GRANDMOTHER

Bailey Boy, are you the best teacher for that?

Bailey eyes his mother to *shut up*.

BAILEY

Le's go, Jay Dubbya.

INT. PEACH TREE FARM HOUSE.

Our perspective is from the inside looking outside as the door opens to Bailey and John Wesley looking doe-eyed and friendly. John Wesley sits on an cylindrical insecticide cannister, his feet barely scraping the ground.

BAILEY

Good afternoon! I notice that you've got a slew of fine'n fertile peach makers here... Saw that a few of'em over by the turnoff look like they off and died.

FARMER

It's a dang borers!

BAILEY

I'll bet they're borers. They're cuttin' into the yield too, boy. And if you don't nipp'er in the bud soon, then they'll be off into birthin' the second generation... Then a third and then they'll be overlappin' and then there goes a whole helluvalot more than your li'l corner yield by the turnoff.

The Farmer squints at Bailey. Skepitcal.

FARMER
You got bug killa?

BAILEY
(points out John Wesley)
My boy just happens to be sittin'
on it right now. And if you apply
the stuff just two times a year,
petal fall and shuck fall, then
that'll be all you need. And for
every dollar y'spend, that's four
dollars a peach you save...
(to John Wesley)
Jay Dubbya, hop off.

John Wesley jumps off the cannister.

EXT. BUICK. PARKED - LATER

Bailey and John Wesley amble back to the car-- minus the
cannister. They get in the car.

INSIDE

Edna looks curious, watching her husband and son get in.

EDNA
How'd that go? I guess he bought
it.

BAILEY
Eh...

GRANDMOTHER
You drop price again?

Bailey starts the car. He's not answering that.

BAILEY
(shifting gears)
... Shuddup, Momma.

GRANDMOTHER
(shaking her head)
Um-hmm...

DRIVING - LATER

Turned around in his seat, John Wesley gazes out the back
window towards the sky. June star doing the same thing.

JOHN WESLEY
... That one over there.

JUNE STAR
(examines)
... A cow.

JOHN WESLEY
Nope. It's a car.

JUNE STAR
You liar, John W. You almost said
cow before too.

JOHN WESLEY
I said cow?

JUNE STAR
You did. Now you're saying car.
You're not playing fair.

JOHN WESLEY
(toying)
I don't think you know how to play.

June Star swipes at John Wesley.

JUNE STAR
I do too. We've played this fifty
million times before.

JOHN WESLEY
Fifty million? You can't even count
that high.

They're SLAPPING each other across Grandmother's lap.

JUNE STAR
I should have surgery on my brain
for allowin' myself to play fifty
million times with a cheater.

Grandmother's had enough. She grabs the children's hands,
holding them down.

JOHN WESLEY
Why can she get away with calling
me a liar, but I get popped in the
head?

GRANDMOTHER

If you two stop monkeying around
for a hot minute... I'll tell you a
story.

JOHN WESLEY

Yawn!

GRANDMOTHER

Oh, you... Well... Bailey Boy's
heart may skip a beat when I say
it, but back when I was a maiden
lady...

(A beat. Remembering.)

Your grandmother had a slew of
suitsors, but there was one-- the
finest specimen of them all. From
Jasper, Georgia. Mr. Edgar Atkins
Teagarden. My lord... He was a good-
looking man, and a gentleman... Oh
my, he brought me a watermelon
every Saturday afternoon and he
would cut his initials on the
outside of it. E.A.T. Eat.

(chuckles to herself)

OUTSIDE

A BILLBOARD on the side of the road reads: *Who's Hungry? Try
RED SAM BBQ!*

GRANDMOTHER (cont'd)

... Well, one Saturday, Mr.
Teagarden brought me a big, healthy
watermelon, and not a soul was home
to receive it, so he dropped it
right there in front of the house,
jumped back onto his buggy and
moseyed on back to Jasper... Now,
ask me if I ever got the chance to
enjoy that delicious watermelon.

JUNE STAR

I'll betcha didn't.

JOHN WESLEY

I'll betcha she did.

OUTSIDE

Another BILLBOARD passes, reading: *Non like famous Red Sam's
BBQ!*

GRANDMOTHER

Well, no, I never... See, Mr. E Teagarden had been endowed with such a unique set of circumstances as to allow him to traverse the world with initials like E.A.T. and it happened that a nigger boy passin' through had seen those initials and helped himself to prob'ly the tastiest, mouth wateringly dribbliest juicy watermelon that boy ever'd bitten.

John Wesley can't stop his giggling. June Star peers out the window. Unimpressed.

OUTSIDE

Another BILLBOARD passes, reading: ***Red Sam! The Fat Boy with the Happy Laugh! You're real close now!***

JUNE STAR

That's not such a great story.

JOHN WESLEY

I thought it was funny.

JUNE STAR

There's no way you'll ever find me marrying somebody just 'cause they brought me a watermelon on Saturdays.

OUTSIDE

Another BILLBOARD passes, reading: ***A Veteran! Red Sam's Your Man! Just a few miles!***

GRANDMOTHER

But he was a real gentlemen... And I would have done real well to've married him.

JUNE STAR

How come?

GRANDMOTHER

For one, he purchased Co'Cola stock right when it first came out which means he's a very wealthy man now... Yes... I'd a done alright with him.

BAILEY

Didn't he recently pass? A few years ago, wasn't it?

A beat. Grandma strains to hide her disappointment.

GRANDMOTHER

Well... I'd a still been alright.

JOHN WESLEY

If you'd a married him, maybe we could've afforded our own motorcycles to take down there.

JUNE STAR

You're as stupid as a pig's nut, John Wesley. Non of us would a been born if Grandma married Edgar Teagarden.

BAILEY

Alright, Everybody, hush up. I'm pulling over at this Red Sam's for some gasoline. Anyone's hungry and we'll do something about that too.

EXT. RED SAMMY'S RESTAURANT. LATER.

The Buick pulls into:

In the center of a spacious clearing, just outside the heart of the town, stands a long, one story building. Part stucco. Part wooden filling station. Part dancehall. All over its walls are painted-on advertisements for *Red Sam's BBQ*.

Car Parts are strewn around the property. A few stacks of old rubber tires placed over to the side.

Nearby, chained to a large chinaberry tree, an ornery GRAY MONKEY fidgets and chatters about by the base of the trunk.

A flatbed TRUCK parked out front. We hear TINKERING from the bottom half of somebody in greasy khaki pants working on the engine, laying on his back underneath.

A droopy-shouldered MAN, WILLY(40s), with a squashed Confederate officer's hat and a wrinkled, tan button-down shirt and dust-flecked boots stands by the truck, talking to the person underneath.

Next to the truck is Willy's 1938 FORD COUPE with a makeshift, wood-boarded trailer hitched to the back of it.

Some poorly fed, yawning CHILDREN AND DOGS peer forlornly out the back window. Willy's wife, DARLA(30s), with long, stringy grey hair, sifts through contents in the trailer.

Willy speaks to the Man Under the Car.

WILLY
What for the kerosene lamp?

The Man Under the Car's voice sounds like something between a sigh and yodel.

MAN UNDER CAR
(still tinkering)
Uh... give ya five bucks for it.

WILLY
Five?

MAN UNDER CAR
Five.

WILLY
What about the Camera?

MAN UNDER CAR
Brand?

Willy looks over to Darla.

WILLY
Sorta brand is it?

Darla rummages through the trailer. Pulls out the camera.

DARLA
(reading label)
Empire.

WILLY
(to Man)
It's a Empire.

MAN UNDER CAR
Oh ya? Decent brand. Have no idea
who makes it... Ten for that.

WILLY
You're crazy. Sears Roebuck's gonna
say that's at least gotta b--

MAN UNDER CAR
You go see if Sears'n No-bucks'll
throw you the loot then.
(MORE)

MAN UNDER CAR (cont'd)
 Do you want this money or do you
 need this money? What's that?

Willy and Darla stare at each other for an answer to the question. Clueless. They don't have one.

MAN UNDER CAR (cont'd)
 ... Right. What's that put us at?

WILLY
 (still looking at Darla)
 ... Puts us at almost five hundred
 dollars.

BAILEY'S BUICK

finally parks. Just as soon, June Star and John Wesley push open their doors and race towards the chained-up monkey.

SPOOKED, the monkey swings to an upper branch. Out of touch. It CHATTERS at them-- a high-pitched, grating noise.

John Wesley chucks a ROCK at the it. He scans the lot for another one while:

MAN UNDER CAR
 I'll take one of your dogs too. I
 could use a dog. Somethin' to keep
 that chippy, goddamn monkey up that
 tree and outta trouble.

John Wesley throws another rock. The monkey keeps screaming.

The figure under the truck shimmies out into the open. The man is RED SAMMY BUTTS. His face is bright red, tired and sweaty. Thick eyebrows. His pants stop at the hip bones, causing his stomach to hang over and sway under his shirt. He spits on his hands, rubs them together and wipes them off on the back of his pants.

He sees the Buick for the first time.

RED SAM
 Well, what the... Whole place just
 surged into Grand Central Station
 all the sudden... Good for me.
 (to Willy)
 So, what's that? We squared up or
 what?...
 (eyeing Willy's car)
 S'pose you better scoot your family
 outta the new hot rod, no?

WILLY

Oh...

Willy looks over at the car, swept over with disillusionment, then he turns back to Red Sam. Then it CLICKS in his head.

WILLY (cont'd)

... Oh ya.
 (to the Children in the
 back seat)
 Jump up out there, now. Pull all
 your stuff'n bags out with ya.

Red Sam pulls out a short stack of crisp twenty dollar bills. He flips through them.

WILLY (cont'd)

(to Red Sam)
 ... Which dog you want?

RED SAM

Surprise me, Willy.
 (hands Willy money)
 Tie it up over there by the water
 hose. Pick one that's small and
 don't eat a damn Holstein calf
 every time it gets hungry.

John Wesley chucks more rocks at the monkey. Nothing hits, but the Monkey reacts to each throw. June Star watches.

Red Sam reads Willy's demeanor. He feels a pang of sorrow for the unfortunate family man. He pats Willy on the back.

RED SAM (cont'd)

It's a good deal, bud. Figure in
 less than a year, most the
 factories'll go back to makin'
 automobiles instead a
 bombs'n'bullets and then this'll
 drop a lotta value. It's a given.
 Thing won't be worth more than two
 hundred come next year.

WILLY

I s'pose yur righ--

RED SAM

(interrupting)
 Y'all know where to catch the
 Greyhound?

WILLY

Uh...
 (pointing)
 Down the road that-a-way--

RED SAM

You got it. Now I have some
 customers I need to tend to, so, if
 you could...

(gestures to the car.)
 ...clean up the mess in there. And
 just dump the rest of it in the
 entrance hall, there. We'll be
 settled and quits. Don't forget
 that camera and lamp is all part of
 it. I'll take the keys right now.

Again, Willy looks at his wife. Again, she is of zero help
 other than commiseration. With a defeated shrug, Willy tosses
 Red Sam the keys to his Ford.

Dismissing Willy before he can even answer, Red Sam pushes
 him to the side and strides over to Bailey and the Buick.

RED SAM (cont'd)

(open arms to Bailey)
 What's the good word, then? You all
 look hungry!

BAILEY

I suppose you're Red Sam?

A wide, greasy grin spreads across Red Sam's face.

RED SAM

Ha! Was it my face?
 (quietly to Bailey)
 Don't mind the vagrants.

Willy pulls out a CRYING YOUNG GIRL(6) from the Ford, but she
 grips the door frame, holding on for dear life, while Willy
 yanks her by her shoes.

RED SAM (cont'd)

Some a these Appalachian mongrels
 just offin' there load before they
 head out to the great salt lick to
 get their butts pounded by a rock
 and a hard place'd be my guess.

Finally, the Young Girl's grip is broken, but the momentum
 from Willy's pull sends them TUMBLING to the ground.

RED SAM (cont'd)
 I dunno how they managed an
 automobile in the first place.
 Wonders of the world, huh?

BAILEY
 You just bought their car?

RED SAM
 Yessir. Gonna customize'er right
 into a hotrod... It's what the kids
 want, and they pay excessive bucks
 for it too.

BAILEY
 How y'do that?

RED SAM
 Well... I'm gonna lower the front a
 bunch for wind purposes.

Red Sam continues explaining as Bailey and the Family follow him inside.

They leave Willy and his family to their own messy unpacking.

INT. RED SAMMY'S RESTAURANT. MOMENTS LATER.

They enter into a long dark room. Counter at one end, tables at the other. A spanning dance floor in the middle.

June Star and John Wesley sprint inside, racing to the wall farthest away.

RED SAM
 ... Because these youngsters are
 more appearance-oriented. I'll
 decorate it with some sorta gaudy
 paint-up-- somethin' with fire or
 somethin' with tits-- slap some
 chrome piping on it.

June Star touches the far wall. John Wesley right after her. Both push off the wall, racing back for the entrance door.

BAILEY
 How's it gonna run?

RED SAM
 I mean, the sunnuvabitch'll be
 fast, but the hell's it matter?
 That's the whole point.
 (MORE)

RED SAM (cont'd)

With these youngsters, it's not about what you're trying to sell, it's about what you make them want to buy.

BAILEY

What're they buyin'?

RED SAM

They're buying a dream, m'friend. A dang dream of sex, speed, money and power... That's what they LOVE.

June Star touches the entrance door first. She wins. John Wesley waves it off, embarrassed.

JOHN WESLEY

(sulking)

You're a full two inches taller which gives you a big advantage.

JUNE STAR

Well, then there's really no point in racing anymore since you're always gonna be two inches shorter than me. From here on out, I accept all your defeats.

Bailey, Grandmother, Edna and Baby sit down at a wooden table next to a corroded, oak, player-piano nickelodeon.

Out from the kitchen struts Red Sam's WIFE, her hair and eyes several shades lighter than her sunburnt skin. Bailey gapes at her. Enamored.

RED SAM'S WIFE

What'll we be chowin' on this afternoon, folks?

BAILEY

(flirtatious)

I suppose... Five of those Bee-bee-queue sandwiches will hafta do the trick for now--wait--

(to Grandmother)

Momma, you gonna want another sandwich? That'll be two today already.

JOHN WESLEY

What's wrong with that. I'm gonna have two too.

BAILEY

That's different. You're a growing boy.

JUNE STAR

He's not either.

John Wesley curses June Star with his eyes.

GRANDMOTHER

Bailey Boy, you are best to let me order my food as I want. Thank you.

(to Red Sam's wife)

I'm all set, though. Four sandwiches will be just fine.

RED SAM'S WIFE

Will that do it for y'all today then?

BAILEY

(with a wink)

Absolutely. And don't forget the sody-pop.

EDNA

Let's put on something sweet. Is your nickelodeon working over there?

RED SAM'S WIFE

(returning to the kitchen)

Of course it works. What on earth would it be doin' out here for if it was only collectin' dust? Last thing we need in here's more dirt'n dust.

Edna moves to the nickelodeon, a coin in hand. Just as she's about to slip in the coin, John Wesley sneaks up from behind her.

JOHN WESLEY

Please. Can I put it in? Which one-- Which one?

EDNA

... I think it'll be the Tennessee Waltz.

GRANDMOTHER

Bless your heart and soul, Edna.

John Wesley drops in the coin. Ca-CLINK.

A Beat. Then we hear The Tennessee Waltz start up, echoing through the hall.

Edna sways softly to the music, holding the sleeping Baby.

JUNE STAR
That one's too slow.

GRANDMOTHER
(eyes closed, listening)
Ohh-- This one... Wanted to dance this one with Bailey at his wedding, but the band leader said he wouldn't play anything that was country heavy.

BAILEY
Well, Patti Page ain't even from Tennessee anyway.

GRANDMOTHER
Bailey, you wanna dance with me now?

Bailey glares at her. That's his answer.

The Grandmother

sways her head from side to side, enchanted by the music. She dances in her seat, holding her arms around an invisible partner.

John Wesley

playing with his utensils.

June Star

feigning sleep.

JUNE STAR
This is gonna lull me to sleep. Why dontcha put on something we can tap to. C'mon, Mamma.

Edna slips another nickel into the slot.

A faster, livelier PIANO TUNE chimes on.

June Star smiles. Giddy. She starts a tapping routine in the middle of the floor.

Red Sam's wife steps out from the kitchen with glasses of Coca-cola CLINKING with ice. She watches June Star with loads of affection and takes a seat.

RED SAM'S WIFE

Ain't she so cute? That little one
is a star in the making.

(to June Star)

Would you like to come be my little
girl?

JUNE STAR

(still tapping)

No. I certainly would not.

(she stops)

The truth is I wouldn't live in a
broke-down place like this for a
million bucks.

June Star merrily skips back to the table.

A beat. Red Sam's Wife stretches her mouth. Bitter.

RED SAM'S WIFE

... Ain't she cute?

The Grandmother glares at June Star. Leans in to the little girl.

GRANDMOTHER

(hissing)

Aren't you ashamed?

JUNE STAR

You told me the devil comes
collectin' when he hears a lie.

GRANDMOTHER

Oh, now, none of that, June Star...

Don't you know better?

Red Sam steps from the kitchen entrance, now with a BBQ sauce-stained white rag draped over his shoulder. He spots his wife and snaps the rag from off his shoulder in agitation.

RED SAM

Would you quit huggin' your butt
'round that seat and hurry up with
these good people's order?

(to Bailey)

Just lounging like a lolligagin'
hula-hoop.

Red Sam, in turn, waddles himself over to their table, sitting down.

RED SAM (cont'd)
 Ah, brother... You can't win. You just can't win.
 (wiping his forehead with a handkerchief)
 These days you don't know who to trust. Ain't that the truth?

GRANDMOTHER
 People are certainly not as nice as they use to be.

RED SAM
 Boom! If that doesn't just nail it in right there... Fact, two fellers come in here last week driving...
 (thinking)
 ... the hell was it?

From out of the kitchen we hear:

RED SAM'S WIFE (O.S.)
 A Chrysler!

RED SAM
 (at his wife)
 Get back to work!
 (to Grandmother)
 I think it was an old, beat-up Chrysler, but it was a good one and these boys looked all right to me. Said they worked at the mill and you know I let them fellers charge the gas they bought? Now why did I do that?

GRANDMOTHER
 Because you're a good man!

Red Sam considers this.

Bailey sits aping. Too hot to respond. Edna pats a moist napkin on the baby's sweaty little forehead.

RED SAM
 (eyes flash, struck with the idea)
 Yes'm, I suppose so.

Finally, Red Sam's wife comes out balancing five plates of food. Three in hers hands, two on each forearm. Each plate with a meaty BBQ sandwich on top.

RED SAM'S WIFE

(placing plates)

Isn't a soul in this green world of God's that you can trust... And I don't count nobody out of that.

(staring at Red Sam)

Not nobody.

John Wesley and June Star wolfing down their food.

Bailey checks the meat.

GRANDMOTHER

Did you read about that criminal, The Misfit, that's escaped?

RED SAM'S WIFE

I wouldn't be a bit surprised if he didn't attack this place right here. If he heard 'bout it being here, I wouldn't be none surprised to see him. If he hears it's two cent in the cash register, I wouldn't be a tall surprised if he--

RED SAM

That'll do. Why don't you get busy with doin' something.

JOHN WESLEY

I want more Co'Cola. And I don't want NO ice in it!

RED SAM

(shooing his Wife)

Ding. Sounds like an order to me. On the hop, girl.

Red Sam's Wife smiles at Grandma, brushes off Red Sam and pivot-turns, all in one move, before sauntering back to the kitchen.

Bailey eyes Red Sam Wife's departure. He'd like a piece of that. Red Sam watches Bailey lust after her.

RED SAM (cont'd)

... A good man is hard to find. Everything is getting terrible.

(MORE)

RED SAM (cont'd)
 I remember the day you could go off
 and leave your screen door
 unlatched. Not no more.

GRANDMOTHER
 Watch! For ye know not what hour
 your Lord doth come.

RED SAM
 Amen.

GRANDMOTHER
 They use to have that sign up the
 roads when I was a girl. Somewhere
 between Chattanooga and Rome. With
 a great big eye in the middle...
 (pointing at June Star and
 John Wesley)
 Great big eye looking right at you.
 Starin' through you. And all you
 could do was look back. Scared.

RED SAM
 ... Yes'm ever since we got settled
 on into this entrepreneurial little
 pearl, the world's since seem'd to
 gone and lost its...well--

GRANDMOTHER
 Its moral compass.

RED SAM
 (convinced)
 That's what it is. The compass went
 uh-wry.

GRANDMOTHER
 Well now, listen to what I think. I
 believe that at the root of the
 problem are the Europeans. They're
 the one who deserve the thrust of
 that blame. The way these people
 have been acting, you'd think our
 nation was just made of only money.

RED SAM
 You know what? There's no damn
 point in even talkin' about it
 'cause you've already called out
 the problem right there.

John Wesley putting the last of his sandwich in his mouth.

JOHN WESLEY
Can I go outside? I'm done.

EDNA
As s--

John Wesley bolts out of his chair, racing outside, punching open the door, letting in a bath of sunlight.

JOHN WESLEY
(yelling the whole way)
MONKEY!!

June Star wipes her mouth, running after him.

Bailey watches them, eating his sandwich.

BAILEY
(chewing)
I wonder if those two ever get a
chance to taste their food.

The leftover adults munch their sandwiches and the music skips off.

EXT. RED SAMMY'S RESTAURANT. MOMENTS LATER.

June Star and John Wesley looking up at:

The lacey chinaberry tree. Perched in the tree is the monkey from before. It grooms itself. Slowly. Purposefully. Catching fleas between its fingers, biting each one carefully as if they were delicacies.

JOHN WESLEY
He starts to make'em look kinda
good.

Red Sam's entrance door swings open. Bailey steps out.

BAILEY
Okay. Let's get this show on the
road. Find us somethin' good and
cheap before we lose the sun.

CUT TO:

The Buick's MOTOR IGNITES.

The GEAR is shifted to DRIVE.

Tires WHEEL, kicking out dirt, accelerating.

EXT. HIGHWAY. TWILIGHT. DRIVING - LATER

The Buick nears a small cluster of buildings. The makings of a small town.

INT. BUICK. DRIVING - CONTINUOUS

Bailey's eyes light up on something down the road.

BAILEY

Ah-ha! See there!

EDNA

Bailey Blair, you have no inkling of an idea if this is a safe establishment or not. It's just, you don't know.

THE BUICK

pulls into a gravel driveway leading to a large, white clapboarded BUILDING and a LINE of IDENTICAL TOURIST CABINS tailing off to its left along the road. Spaced every ten or twelve feet, the cabins match: WHITE BOARDED, TWO WINDOW, COVERED PORCH with a SINGLE FOLDING CHAIR. An OAK TREE in the front of each next to the paved walkway. A few cabins look a little worse for the wear.

A street sign out front: ***Strictly Modern, BLUE BONNET CABINS, Almost Like Home. Whites Only! Locked Garages. Heated!***

AN OLD HOUND DOG

lies on the weather-grayed and roughened planking of a front porch.

All is quiet except for the CHIRR of heat bugs... And very distant voices in chorus SINGING in divine worship in a Baptist church. Vagaries of breeze fan the voices in and out of audibility.

We hear a TOOT from the Buick's horn. At this, the dog lifts his nose to catch the breeze, sniffs, and then, whining, lowers his head to the floor. He huffs briefly and goes to sleep.

We DRIFT UP. The dog is sleeping before a porch with a bland sign nailed next to the front door: ***Office***

In one lot, next to the cabin is parked an old 1930 Ford T. On the front porch, sitting relaxed in a chair, is a bosomy BLACK WOMAN, NOEL FARNSWORTH(20s). A youthful face but dark rings under her eyes. Her cheap, formal dress and ease of comfort leaning back in that chair suggest she is a kind of 'regular' here at the Blue Bonnet despite the *Whites Only* sign. She watches the Buick park.

The family opens the car doors in unison. Bailey marches towards the Office Building.

John Wesley chasing a squirrel. Cutting on dimes, the squirrel jukes him out. He gets his legs crossed and falls down.

Edna takes in the fresh air and LIFTS the bundled Baby above her head to enjoy the same. The Baby SIMPERS. Grandmother sits in the back seat with her feet swung outside, she stretches her legs.

June Star watches John Wesley's MISS capturing the squirrel for a final time.

JUNE STAR

John Wesley, you are the worst. You get your coordination from Daddy, that's for sure.

The squirrel zips up an oak tree.

Bailey returns from the Office, clasping his hands together, satisfied with himself.

BAILEY

Okay. We're here. And the manager's in the Elks too, so we're sitting on a two for one. How great is that?

(clapping his hands)

Let's get our stuff out. Chop chop. It's numbers five and six.

Bailey notices:

Noel observing him and listening in.

BAILEY (cont'd)

(to Noel)

Hello! Fine afternoon!

NOEL

Without a doubt.

Next to Noel, the outer screen door cracks open. Someone talks to Noel from inside. Inaudible. Noel nods. She stands and slips inside.

Bailey is focused on his open trunk, trying to figure out the luggage situation.

BAILEY

Kids, come get your knapsacks,
please.

INT. TOURIST CABIN - DAY

Inside the darkened cabin. Bailey sits on the bed, rubbing his head.

Edna HUMMING a tune, changing the Baby's diapers.

A KNOCK at the door catches them both off guard.

VOICE AT DOOR

Hello? Bailey Blair? That's you,
isn't it?

Bailey gets to the door.

BAILEY

Who's that, you say?

VOICE AT DOOR

...I'll tell you where we worked. I
was the hotheaded shipping manager.
Norris Insect Spray.

Bailey

searching through his memory until-- He remembers exactly who this is.

He pushes the door open and regards his old friend: MASON MCMILLON. IRISH. SCAR from his NOSE to the EDGE of his RIGHT LIP. An old hooligan, wizened from the benefit of fatherhood and the repeated punishment of law enforcement. He wears a short-sleeved button down. Both he and Bailey are elated at this reunion.

BAILEY

Hot shit. Mason McSomethin'

MASON

It's McMillon.

BAILEY

I'll sure as hell bet it is. What are you doing in Davidson, Georgia?

MASON

Goddamnit, nuthin'. Is this your family? How the hell are you?

BAILEY

Jus' headin down to Florida. I'm in the, uh, pesticide business. I have a big potential opportunity down there, so... What're you doin on the vile side a your state line?

MASON

Only place that has decent amenities in the nearby an' don't hold Jim Crow up to the scriptures.

The Baby HICCUPS. A few more of them. Then he starts CRYING.

BAILEY

And there you go. Ah, m'god...

Over the crying, the two old friends standing in silent, grinning regard for the other.

INT. MASON'S CABIN - LATER - NIGHT

Mason leans over a cup of WHISKEY. He's tipsy. A smile on his face.

Bailey sits with his feet up on the bed.

MASON

I's layin' pipe... Up and down the roads since Norrisville and... Well, the labor was violent and it came that I's basically, ya know, night after a workday, I'd jus' soak m'self in whiskey 'til I sank to the floor... Then wake up mebbe an hour later, and take it on into the night. Pass out *completely* anywhere between midnight and three a.m. Next day, mebbe 'bout noontime'd roll out and you step out, get blasted by the sun and boil off that liquor in a frenzy of head pain and shit-feeling only to... fuckin' hope...

(MORE)

MASON (cont'd)
 you got the fortitude to do it
 again the next day.

A toilet flushes. Noel comes out from the bathroom. Her face blanketed with excessive white powder and rouge makeup. Her new red dress, tight as a second skin. She picks up the WHISKEY BOTTLE. Unscrews it. Mason and Bailey both hold up glasses. She pours Mason about four inches. Bailey gets *maybe* two.

MASON (cont'd)
 Me and Noel... There was a time
 when my reputation in town wasn't--
 I'd be the type to draw a crowd
 around myself whether that were for
 laughs or whether that were 'cause
 I'd just pick a fight and pull a
 knife for no reason, and... I
 earned a bad name as a mean-as-hell
 greaser and it came that nobody'd
 drink with me, nor no woman'd risk
 to even bat an eyelash in my
 direction. When I showed up, the
 party's over. Pretty soon I was
 marked and didn't even-- couldn't
 even venture into ANYwhere or else
 they'd waylay me into the street,
 smash me up pretty hard.

Noel sits down, squeezing herself onto Mason's lap.

MASON (cont'd)
 As things come to be, I ended up
 becoming a regular face at the
 nigger brothels over on the
 eastside, like the Cathouse where
 Noel works.

Mason kisses Noel on the cheek. Pinches her butt cheeks.

MASON (cont'd)
 ... See these kinda girls got
 candied tongues, big soft lips, sly
 fingertips and lord please shoot me
 if you can make a rump better'n
 these rubbery cantelopes right
 here.

Bailey sips his cup of whiskey. He's awkward in Noel's presence.

BAILEY
 You two, uh, known each other for a
 long time?

MASON

This little nubian sugarpop got under my skin... we share some history from home towns. She and my sister were friends when they were kids, and not to get into it, but...

Noel gazing into Mason's eyes. Mason looking back, as if judging her.

MASON (cont'd)

I saw her all grows up one day and I just... accosted this woman. She was naturally surprised-- at first, she politely waved me away. I yelled at her, told her I was not as inebriated as I might appear and...

Mason takes a long drink. Bailey follows his lead, but he can only sip.

MASON (cont'd)

... Finally, I overcame her doubts.

NOEL

And you dragged me upstairs. I was completely terrified of you. But I just let you go and by the end of it,

(as if climaxing)

I was the one beggin' "OH, Lo'd God, fo'give me, Mistah! I'm SOORRRRY!!"

MASON

Yessir, the seed of hunger for Miss Noel Farnsworth's been well planted since boyhood and it has needed no encouragement to sprout.

KNOCK KNOCK-- June Star standing at the screen door. Bailey pitches straight up.

BAILEY

What you need, June Star?

JUNE STAR

Why's that colored woman allowed to be in the cabin?

BAILEY

Never mind that. Is that all you need to say?

JUNE STAR

... Momma said you need to come and roll up the windows in the car cause there's vagrants around.

Bailey gulps the rest of his drink. Leans into Mason.

BAILEY

(softly, slyly)
I shall return forthwith.

NOEL

(to Mason)
We should go.

MASON

(nodding)
Yes we should. Bailey Blair, acquit your family for the evening and join us at the cathouse so's we can set you on the path to glory.

Bailey, MOUTHING for him to BE QUIET, but he's completely obvious about it. Then:

June Star. Still at the door, peering in. Bailey hops to his feet. He's angry, but what he forgets to conceal is his RAGING ERECT MEMBER, almost busting through his pants. June Star sees it and stares at it, horrified.

BAILEY

(to June Star)
Get back to your cabin!

She doesn't budge. Fixated on the erection.

JUNE STAR

(horrified)
Aw, Daddy, what is that?

Bailey follows her eyes down to his saluting soldier. His face reddens. Mason's aware of everything.

MASON

(grins)
Bailey, why don't you invite her on inside?

Bailey covers the bulge with his drink which draws, of course, more attention to it.

MASON (cont'd)
 (to June Star)
 C'mon in, honey. We were just
 tellin' funny stories. You can
 listen too-- Sit on your poppa's
 lap--

BAILEY
 (to Mason)
 Easy, now! That's m'damn daughter!
 (back at June Star, voice
 cracking)
 I said, get back! Listen to me!

Bailey takes threatening steps towards the door. June Star takes the hint and runs back to her cabin. Bailey yells at her from the door:

BAILEY (cont'd)
 (stern but distraught)
 Don't you be an eavesdropper, now
 girl!-- I'll get to the windows in
 just a second!

Bailey leans on the door frame. Looks down at his pants. Ashamed. A beat. Noel takes a long couple gulps of whiskey. She eyes Bailey. Her eyes greeting him like a long lost lover. Now Mason eyes him too-- an invitation-- if Bailey wants it.

BAILEY (cont'd)
 (ashamed, to himself)
 ... Goddamnit...
 (looks to Mason)
 ... You have a car?

INT. CABIN - NIGHT - LATER

On the front door. KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK. Quick. Frantic.

GRANDMOTHER (O.S.)
 (other side of the door)
 Edna!... Edna! Now, Edna!

With her hair up in a towel and bathrobe on, Edna opens the door:

Grandmother, eyes bulging. June Star faithfully by her side.

GRANDMOTHER (cont'd)
Where has he gone off to? It's been
maybe more than two hours.

EDNA
Will you let him be? He went off
with his friend.

GRANDMOTHER
And his head's swishin' that
whiskey around and you know what
that means...

OUTSIDE the CABIN lookin in. We hear MOANS from the baby.

EDNA
... He'll find his way back before
the dawn and we'll be on our way.
Get on to bed. June Star, get to
bed.
(to Grandmother)
Really, will you please stop riling
them up?

The Baby's CRY rings through the cabin.

EDNA (cont'd)
Stay inside your own business. Just
sleep now... And keep the door
locked.

Edna slams the door shut.

The Grandmother turning. Churning over ideas in her head.
Finally:

GRANDMOTHER
(a twinkle in her eye)
June Star... Go wake up your
brother.

INT. BUICK. DRIVING - NIGHT

The Grandmother drives, looking over the steering wheel. June
Star rides shotgun. John Wesley is curled up, asleep in the
back seat.

JUNE STAR
The man in room four called it the
Cathouse.
(MORE)

JUNE STAR (cont'd)
 He said it was down this street
 about a mile after there aren't
 anymore lights. He said it's a
 business for coloreds.

GRANDMOTHER
 (under her breath,
 seething)
 ...A negro cathouse.

INT. GREENMOUNTAIN CATHOUSE AND SALOON - NIGHT

A musky, smoke-filled brothel bar. It's a small, side room adjoining a larger building which functions as a whorehouse.

At the bar, A light skinned, African-American WOMAN. Her dress formal but lightly frayed and worn. This is BESS, a resident whore. She is passed out, her head down, her arms wrapped around her head. A mess of shot glasses and a half empty bottle of gin next to her. Somehow, her purple pillbox hat's managed to stay on.

We hear a tight GIGGLE. Then ANOTHER, less composed...

A STREAM of WATER POURS from above, onto her head. She shakes herself awake, flinging the hat off. LAUGHS from several people. Someone's just poured water on her. The shock on her face turns to anger. The length of time this takes and the severity of these expressions suggest that she's drunk.

The culprit is Mason. He stands, holding an upsidedown, dripping water glass. He relishes the fan fare from Bailey, Noel and a small crowd of local HOOLIGANS, HOUSE REGULARS and YOKELS caught up in the mischief.

BESS
 (pointing at Mason)
 Your day's gonna come, boy!

MASON
 (to Bailey)
 This one's Bessie. And I get a
 double kick outta callin' Bessie
 like I use to call m'pigs back in
 Tallahassee. BEh-SSSSIIIEEEEE!!!

BESS
 (drunk, feigning kindness)
 Muthafucka... And I've seen you
 cryin' when you call me that... Be
 slappin' up from behind me, and I--
 you'll be feelin' sad about
 somethin'.

(MORE)

BESS (cont'd)
 (to Bailey)
 'Cause he just gets so angry
 sometimes.

(back to Mason)
 I know that's why you call me that.
 You love makin' me look stupid. But
 I'd just laugh out loud at you...
 Out loud, boy!...

Bess belts out a giddy CACKLE. Right at Mason. Eventually,
 Mason smiles despite himself.

BESS (cont'd)
 See... And I'd 'ventually get you
 to start laughin' too. Boy, I'd get
 you laughing and cryin' at the same
 time.

MASON
 (proudly to Bailey)
 Pretty soon, she'd start callin' me
 her Wild Man.

BESS
 (between cackles)
 My Wil' Man!

MASON
 Uh-hmm. Your Wi--

Bess-- a quick move-- FLICKS open a filletto KNIFE to Mason's
 neck. She's not cackling anymore.

BESS
 (dead serious to Mason)
 Don't you never... EVER-- spill
 your jokes on me... You heard me?

MASON
 Alright. Alright. We was... just
 takin' part in a bit of spirited,
 good natured fun. That's all,
 Bessie-girl.
 (to the others)
 Holy shit. Let's go on'n put the
 cutlery aside and deliver ourselves
 to upper-level expenditure? Before
 I have to take this whore, wrap her
 around my knee and paddle her ass
 raw?

Noel leans into Mason, Bess' knife still at his neck. She
 whispers in his ear.

NOEL

Oh, let's expend. How bout I
expend... and you can explode?
How'd that be?

MASON

Sounds 'bout right.
(to Bailey)
You mind escortin' this other fine,
uh, cocodette who thinks knives
are funny, to our upper quarters?

Bailey's eyes seem to glaze over, imagining the proposition.

BAILEY

My god lord Jesus all to hell'n
back with that sweet jezebel.

INT. CATHOUSE. BEDROOM - NIGHT

A bed frame shaking HARD, on the verge of collapsing.

Mason has Noel flipped over, doggy-style. Her rubbery caramel
ass slapping against his hipbones. Her back forced to bow.
Her neck twisted as her head, jammed against the wall, is
forced to the side. He pounds and pounds with everything's
he's got. Over and over and over

Mason looks down at her, mildly pleased with the heavy duty
fornication.

Bailey

falls onto his bed. His face soothed in a post-coital stupor.
A cigarette dangling from his lips. Bess' head drops onto his
chest. Her eyes closed, but she's awake, smiling.

We still hear the BANG, BANG, BANG from the other bed.

BESS

Would you look at him? Nell gettin'
banged like a screen door in a
hurricane.

Bailey LAUGHS. Drunken euphoria.

INT. BUICK. PARKED - NIGHT

The Grandmother and June Star parked just off from the front
of the Green Mountain Cathouse. They look on towards the
house with disapproving, bewildered abandon.

John Wesley stirs and awakens in the backseat. He sits up and takes in the scene in front of him.

JOHN WESLEY
(groggy, yawning)
... Daddy's here?

JUNE STAR
Mmm-hmmm...

A beat.

JOHN WESLEY
... And ya'll want me to go inside?

JUNE STAR
Mmm-hmmm...

GRANDMOTHER
John Wesley, I see a doggy-door you can shimmy through. Right there in front. Do you see it?

JOHN WESLEY
(squinting)
No.

GRANDMOTHER
Well, don't worry. It's there, and I hardly suppose they're gonna do a plug'a harm to you. These... men aren't in any kind of mood to pull anything on a youngster and... I'm sorry, but June Star will not step one inch of herself inside this servile habitation.

John Wesley looking out the window. Forlorn. He's pretty sure he's just drawn the short end of the stick.

INT. CATHOUSE. ENTRANCE - MOMENTS LATER

A grimy doggy door cut out of an even grimier wooden door. Illuminated by a hard, yellow light.

The doggy door flips up. The top of a head... John Wesley, scared but titillated. His head completely poked through. Scans the place over. He sees:

The bar to the left. A huge staircase directly ahead, and an empty hallway with closed doors on the right.

We hear Mason's continuous BANGING from inside-- BUT someone's coming down the stairs!...

EXT. CATHOUSE ENTRANCE PORCH - CONTINUOUS

...John Wesley quickly pulls out. Scoots his back against the wall next to the door. Looks at:

THE PARKED BUICK

June Star and the Grandmother in the car, earnestly watching him from afar. The Grandmother motions for John Wesley to get back inside.

JOHN WESLEY

Exhales. About to go through the doggy door again, but it OPENS, almost taking his head off with it.

Two drunk JOHNS stumbling out. They falter down the steps and away. John Wesley sneaks into the open door behind the departing men.

The continuous BANGING is heard.

MEANWHILE IN THE BUICK

June Star getting sleepy. Grandmother tapping her finger tips along the steering wheel.

JUNE STAR

Why did we HAVE to come?

GRANDMOTHER

... So that I can know what your father's doing.

JUNE STAR

... Why do we have to stay?

GRANDMOTHER

... So that I know that your father knows that I know what your father's doing.

June Star sighs.