

Five Easy Pieces

By

Carole Eastman

TITLE SEQUENCE:

The Bach-Vivaldi A-Minor Concerto for Four Pianos
PLAYS OVER a series of family album photographs.
Written in careful penmanship beneath each are
names identifying family members:

1ST PHOTO: A man stands in front of the raised
sounding board of a piano, playing the viola.
Seated on the piano bench, accompanying him, is a
woman in a maternity dress:

"Isabelle and Nicholas"

2ND PHOTO: A boy of 11, wearing conductor's tails
and holding a raised baton in his right hand as if
about to gesture a downbeat:

"Herbert Kreutzer Dupea"

3RD PHOTO: Another boy of approximately 9, in the
act of playing the violin:

"Carl Fidelio Dupea"

4TH PHOTO: The two boys are now poised behind the
piano. Seated on its bench is a girl of 6, her
hands resting on the keyboard. Written beneath:

"Elizabeth Partita Dupea"

5TH PHOTO: The above family group, seated on the
porch of the Dupea home. All eyes but Isabelle's
are faced toward the camera. She beams upon a 3
year-old asleep in her arms, his head resting
against her bosom. His figure is encircled by the
pen's marking and preceding his name is the
configuration of a small heart:

"Robert Eroica Dupea"

INT. MUSIC ROOM - DUPEA HOME - DAY

BACH-VIVALDI OVER:

A 7-year-old BOBBY sits in a chair, his feet dangling in absent-minded rhythm to a chamber piece played by his father, his two brothers and his sister.

CLOSE ON a metronome, marking a slow etude rhythm.

The CAMERA MOVES from it to Bobby, on the piano bench beside his mother. As she patiently demonstrates the etude for him, he places a thumb in his mouth and leans against her arm.

ON THE METRONOME at an andante rhythm. CARL and TITA, now in their teens, are seated side by side on the piano bench, playing four-hands with dazzling virtuosity.

The CAMERA MOVES from them to a framed newspaper article on the music-room wall. Below a photograph of a 20-year-old young man are the words: "Herbert Kreutzer Dupea - Seattle's Youngest Guest Conductor."

INT. RECITAL HALL GREEN ROOM - NIGHT

BACH-VIVALDI OVER:

Bobby, at 10, wearing a dress suit. His mother combs his hair with maternal concentration.

CLOSE-UP of a program announcing a Dupea family recital. The CAMERA SCANS down the bill, over:

Sonata in C Major for Two Violins - Bach - Played by Nicholas and Carl Dupea.

Like As a Lovelorn Turtle - Hendel - Sung by Isabelle Dupea.

Rondo Alla Turca - Mozart - Played by Elizabeth Dupea.

Piano Sonata, Opus 110 - Beethoven - Played by Herbart Dupea.

The CAMERA COMES to rest on:

Five Easy Pieces - Grebner - Played by Robert Dupea.

INT. MORTUARY CHAPEL - DAY

Five Easy Pieces, played haltingly OVER the torsos of a line of people moving slowly down the chapel aisle.

ANOTHER ANGLE

shows a solemn procession of the above, filing by an open casket holding Isabelle Dupea.

ON THE FAMILY PEW

The CAMERA PANS from NICHOLAS, seated on the aisle, to the four adult children seated next to him and COMES TO REST on Bobby. His gaze is cast down to his lap, as he refuses to look at:

The pale profile of his mother's face resting within the satin folds of the casket lining, and...

... as the last of the "family friends" pay their respect: Nicholas steps out into the aisle and, followed by Tita, Carl and HERBERT, moves down toward the casket.

Bobby rises from his seat and makes his way toward the aisle, where he hesitates briefly, then turns and walks up the aisle and out the chapel doors.

TITLES END

EXT. SIGNAL HILL OIL FIELD - DAY

TAMMY WYNETTE'S "STAND BY YOUR MAN" OVER:

The toothed bucket of a back hoe trenches into the earth, then lifts up into the air, revealing Bobby in hard-hat and heavy gloves, operating the levers. As the hoe swings off to the side and deposits a load of earth into the rear of a truck...

... a SERIES OF SHOTS begins, showing Bobby and a fellow hard-hat (ELTON) engaged in the dirty and dangerous task of working "crew" with a team of TOOL-PUSHERS on the derricks of Signal Hill. Functioning as servants of the well and its pumps, the PULL rods, MAKE and BREAK joints on the rig floor, WELD tubing, CARRY pipes, CLIMB the "tour," and PLAY THE DOZENS on beer wagon breaks.

INT. BOBBY'S CAR - SIGNAL HILL - NIGHT

ABOVE SONG OVER:

Bobby, still in his hard hat, as he drives. Out through the window, the derricks of the Hill can be seen, their night-work lights on.

EXT. BOBBY'S CAR - NIGHT

SONG OVER:

FOLLOWING ON the car as it moves off the Hill into the seamy districts adjacent to it, passing by fast food joints, liquor stores, all-night porno parlors and neon-lighted bars.

INT. BOBBY'S CAR - NIGHT

SONG OVER:

ON BOBBY'S FACE:

as he stares out through the windshield, his eyes distant, dwelling in an oblivion that blanks both the present and past.

EXT. BOBBY'S CAR - NIGHT

SONG OVER:

The car pulls onto a low-rent residential street and comes to a stop in front of a small bungalow.

Bobby exits the car, moves up the walkway to the house and disappears inside.

INT. RAYETTE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

SONG OVER:

Bobby, seated on the couch, a can of beer in hand, staring morosely across the room, to:

A PORTABLE STEREO,

playing the song:

WYNETTE (V.O.)

"And if you love him/Oh be proud of him/For after all, he's just a

man..."

RAYETTE DIPESTO,

in a waitress's uniform with a bowl of beer nuts. After placing them on the coffee table in front of him, she leans down and kisses him. Challenged by a less than reciprocal response, she kisses him more fervently. As she moves her lips from his ear to his neck, he lifts the can to his mouth and drinks.

WYNETTE (V.O.)

"Stand by your man/And show the
world you love him/Keep giving all
the love you can/Stand by your
man."

The song concludes, and setting aside her ardor for the moment:

RAYETTE

(Arky accent)

I'm gonna play it again...

As she starts for the stereo, he takes hold of her hand.

BOBBY

You're not going to play it again.

RAYETTE

Well, lemme play the other side
then.

BOBBY

No.

Again, he prevents her from moving to the stereo and pulls her down onto the couch.

RAYETTE

Now quit, Bobby. You said you're
goin' a help me pick a song.

BOBBY

You said.

RAYETTE

Well, lemme sing the one I picked
an' see what you think...
(she sings)

"When there's a fire in your heart/Break the glass/Sound the alarm..."

He picks up one of the couch pillows and holds it over his ear.

RAYETTE

Oh, you prick...

She pulls it from his hand.

RAYETTE

How 'bout if I just cut off your damn water?

BOBBY

I'm too moved by your gentility to speak.

She immediately softens and tries to become more "refined."

RAYETTE

Sugar, you know how I feel about you, don't you? I'm just tryin' to get you to take an interest in my kind a things, an' what I'm tryin' to do with myself...

(bringing her face close to his)

You know, there id'n anything in the world I wouldn't do for you, baby. I started livin' the day I found you, you know that?

BOBBY

You're playing the other side.

Very hurt, she sits up and looks away from him. He finishes the beer and holds the can out to her.

BOBBY

Cerveza.

RAYETTE

(grabbing it from him)
Serveza yourself!

BOBBY

Now, now.

RAYETTE

(she stands up)

No, dammit, I would easy.

And, as she turns and goes toward the kitchen:

BOBBY

But you heal fast.

Through the open door to the kitchen, Rayette can be seen opening the refrigerator. She takes out a can of beer and returns to Bobby.

RAYETTE

(over the above)

You can play the piano, an' your whole damn family can play on some type a musical instrument. An' all I'm askin' is for you to listen to my singing for one single little second...

She hands him the can and sits back down on the couch.

RAYETTE

But you think you would? No, you're too damn selfish...

He gestures at the name tag on her dress, and, as we'll find he often does, speaks in the Okie-Arky accent he's learned from working the rigs:

BOBBY

Why'nt you take 'at sign off your tit, Ray, an' let's go on out.

RAYETTE

Out where?

She sits down and begins removing the tag.

BOBBY

I don't know, I'll holler up Elton an' Stoney...

She thinks about it, then moves closer to him and begins unbuttoning his workshirt, as:

RAYETTE

I'll go out with you, or I'll stay here, and do anything you'd like for me to do... if you'll just do one thing. If you'll tell me that you love me.

BOBBY

You can sing the song.

RAYETTE

(annoyed)

You know what, you are never satisfied.

BOBBY

That's right, hand.

The response makes her deeply insecure and she immediately lays her body against his...

RAYETTE

Oh, now, baby...

... and initiates another round of kissing.

INT. BOWLING ALLEY - NIGHT

Bobby lifts his ball from the return rack, moves to the lane and bowls a perfect strike. Making a self congratulatory gesture of triumph, he turns back to:

Elton, seated at the scoring table. His wife, STONEY, is seated beside Rayette on the horseshoe banquette. As he addresses Rayette, we note that Elton's two front teeth are missing.

ELTON

(Okie accent)

Your ball, Ray.

RAYETTE

(reluctant)

Is this suppose to be fun?

BOBBY

Go on, get up there...

She rises and moves to the rack.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

... and stay relaxed this time.

Picking up ball, she moves to the head of the lane and slings it down the alley, watching hopefully as...

... it rolls off to the right and takes only one pin.

ON BOBBY

as she moves to her second ball.

BOBBY

Now don't loft it, just release it like I told you.

ON RAYETTE

as she bowls the ball down the right-hand rut and comes back to the banquette, apologizing:

RAYETTE

The ball's too heavy for me, honey...

He looks past her to Stoney, about to bowl her ball.

BOBBY

It's not the damn ball.

And as Stoney bowls a strike, Rayette hugs his arm.

RAYETTE

I'm tryin', baby, so don't start gettin' mad now.

BOBBY

No, I'm not mad at you, hand. It'll be all right. Just spot and follow through...

And as Elton bowls a strike...

BOBBY (CONT'D)

(mumbling)

Shit.

He gets up and passes Elton on his way to the rack.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Nice ball, El.

Rayette, to Stoney as she watches Bobby prepare to bowl:

RAYETTE

Id'n he somethin' to see?

And as he makes another strike and returns to the banquette, she gets up and throws her arms around him. He returns her embrace, smiling over her shoulder at:

Two heavily made-up young women (TWINKY and BETTY) taking possession of the adjacent lane. (Note that Betty is of diminutive proportions, while Twinky is Amazonian.)

RAYETTE (CONT'D)

Is it my turn again?

BOBBY

Right. Now show me a little somethin' this time, okay? Give me some form...

He remains standing, watching as she throws another gutter ball and then comes back toward him, alibi ing:

RAYETTE

I can't help it, honey, the ball just keeps goin' cocky wobbly on me...

BOBBY

Will you just do what the hell I tell you...

RAYETTE

I did, didn' I, El?

BOBBY

You got another ball comin'.

She moves to the rack and, concentrating hard, advances down the lane and releases the ball. It rolls slowly down the center, hits at precisely the right spot and clears the pins.

ELTON

Atta boy, Ray!

Ecstatic, she comes back to the banquette, seating herself beside Bobby and trying to solicit a response from him.

RAYETTE

That was damn good, wad'n it? I finally did it...

BOBBY

Yeah, great.

(begins removing his
bowling shoes)

Why don't you throw Z's for 19 frames, and then roll a strike on the last ball in the last frame of a losing game? Just wonderful.

Turning to address the two young women over the back of the banquette.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Wasn't it, ladies?

TWINKY

(pointing at herself)

Are you talking to us?

Rayette pulls off her rental shoes and throws them to the floor.

RAYETTE

I'm gonna go wait in the car.

He stretches his arms out on the back of the banquette as though he intends to reside there awhile.

BOBBY

Yeah, why don't you do that.

She grabs her sling-back and her purse and as she gets up:

STONEY

Wait an I'll I go with you,
honey...

As she picks up her belongings and follows Rayette:

ELTON

(changing his shoes)

We gotta get on home an' relieve
the sitter. Why'nt you an' Ray come
on over.

BOBBY

Okay. Go ahead. I'll settle up for
the beers...

(hands him the bowling
shoes)

An' walk Rayette over with you,
will you.

Elton moves off and Bobby, now full of remorse,
slumps into a depressed reverie. Beyond him, Betty
and Twinky, can be seen, engaged in some discussion
concerning him.

A WAITRESS with a tray approaches and leans down to
him.

WAITRESS

Can I get you anything else?

BOBBY

No. How much do I owe you?

WAITRESS

Five'll do it.

He takes some loose bills from his pocket and lays
them on her tray. She thanks him and moves off. As
he reaches down and pulls on one of his boots,
Twinky approaches behind him and leans down over
the back of the banquette.

TWINKY

We been wantin' to ask you
something. Are you the guy on YV?

BOBBY

Am I on TV?

TWINKY

(pointing to Betty)

She says you're the one that sells
all the cars on TV.

BOBBY

Well, I don't claim to have sold
'em all. They still have some left,
I believe.

Betty appears on the other side of the banquette.

BETTY

See, I told you it was him...
(then to Bobby)
Your name's Donnie something,
right?

BOBBY

I leave it to you.

BETTY

My name is Shirley, but they call
me Betty, and her name's Twinky.

BOBBY

(looking to Twinky)
Twinky?

BETTY

(explaining)
Yeah, 'cause she's so "twinky"...

BOBBY

(looking from one to the
other)
Well, Betty and Twinky, it sure is
nice talking to you girls. I just
wish I had more time...

BETTY

That's a wig you wear, isn't it?

BOBBY

(touching his hair)
A wig?

BETTY

Yeah, I told her it was you, but
that you're wearing a wig, 'cause
on TV you're mostly bald in the
front.

BOBBY

(to Twinky)
Your little friend's real sharp
there...

(to Betty)
Yeah, I don't like to wear the wig on TV, because with two and a half million people watching you, you've gotta be sincere. I just like to wear it when I'm out slippin' around bowling alleys an' things like that. I think it gives me a little more class, don't you?

TWINKY
Oh, definitely...

BETTY
(looking at his hairline)
Yeah, but I can see a little bitty of the net up there, that's what give it away.

TWINKY
It's so weird to see you in person, but that's who she says you are.

BETTY
(to her)
It is him, he said it's him.
(to Bobby)
Aren't you.

BOBBY
Yeah, you could say it's me.

Twinky reaches over to the scoring table, picking up a pencil and a score sheet.

TWINKY
I'm gonna give you our number, Donnie, just in case...
(as she writes)
We're both professionals, if you didn't guess.

BOBBY
Well, you seem very professional...

TWINKY
(handing the score sheet to him)
I always tell everyone the same thing. I got rolled and beat up real bad recently, and since then

it's two for one, an' I work
strictly in tandem with Betty...

He glances at the dwarfish Betty.

BOBBY

Yeah, I can see how she'd come in
handy.

EXT. BOWLING ALLEY PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Rayette sits sulking in Bobby's car. He comes up to
the passenger window and leans down to her.

BOBBY

Come on. We're goin' over to
Elton's.

RAYETTE

I'm not.

BOBBY

You just going to sit there?

RAYETTE

Yes.

BOBBY

Okay. Hope no one hits on you.

RAYETTE

I hope they do.

He casually slaps the outside of the door.

BOBBY

See you later, then...

He walks off through the lot.

ON RAYETTE

staring out through the windshield.

ON BOBBY

as he stops and comes back to the car.

BOBBY

No one would want to hit on you,
you look too pathetic.

No response.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Come on, DiPesto. We can still have a good time.

RAYETTE

You're the pathetic one, not me.

BOBBY

I'm going on over there...

RAYETTE

I'm not some piece a crap.

BOBBY

I know you're not.

RAYETTE

You treat me like I was.

BOBBY

I'm sorry.

RAYETTE

(close to tears)

You go slippin' around in front a my face, an' in front a Elton an' Stoney. What do you imagine they think a someone you treat that way...

BOBBY

Now, hand...

He opens the door and gets inside, putting his arm around her.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Elton and Stoney know how I feel about you. An' they're just goin' to think I'm not too nice a guy, which I'm not, an' that you're a hell of a person puttin' up with me, that's all.

RAYETTE

You're goin' a find me dead one time.

BOBBY

Sssh, come on now...

(he kisses her)

Be a good girl.

RAYETTE

If you really want a get up an'
leave me, you can read about it in
the newsprint.

BOBBY

I'm not going to get up an' leave
you.

(kisses her again, then:)

Now let's go over to El's an' have
a good time.

RAYETTE

Do you love me, Bobby?

He hesitates briefly, then:

BOBBY

Well now, what do you think?

Though hardly an undying declaration, it's close
enough to fill her with forgiveness. Reaching over,
she pulls him into her arms.

EXT. SIGNAL HILL DERRICK - DAY

KALEIDOSCOPIIC SERIES OF SCENES, showing Elton and
Bobby WORKING THE RIG as part of a four-man team.
The DRILLER stands back, giving them directives,
while the prestigious DERRICKMAN, the "star" of the
team, lounges around in the b.g. Though he has been
working the fields for some months, it is apparent
that Bobby is still somewhat of a novice in the
operations of the rig.

FADE OVER ABOVE ACTIONS, to:

INT. SIGNAL HILL DOGHOUSE - DAY

An impromptu card game, taking place on a lunch
break.

(IMPROVISED) Bobby, in a buoyant mood, lays down a
winning poker hand and rakes in a pile of bills and
change lying on the table. The participants include
Elton and THREE OTHER TOOLPUSHERS. In the b.g., as

the game continues, other "HANDS" can be seen changing clothes.

INT. TWINKY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Bobby sits morosely on the couch beside Twinky. One of his arms is around her, the other holds a can of beer. Both he and Twinky are looking at...

... Elton, who rides Betty on his leg as both sing "Ride a Cockhorse To Banbury Cross." She begins to laugh with the hysterical abandon of a child, and Elton, nearly beside himself, looks over to Bobby.

ELTON

God, id'n she the cutest damn thing
in your life!

EXT. SIGNAL HILL FIELD - DAY

(ELTON SINGING A RANK DOGHOUSE SONG OVER:)

REMOTE ANGLE ON BOBBY AND ELTON

Having been up all night, drinking, they move unsteadily toward a derrick and are intercepted by the driller as they climb the stairs to the rig floor. He informs them they are unfit to work and "impolitely" eighty-sixes them for the day.

EXT. BOBBY'S CAR - FREEWAY - DAY

(ELTON SINGING OVER:)

Bobby's car slows as it moves into a freeway jam.

INT. BOBBY'S CAR - FREEWAY - DAY

He gestures out at the traffic as Elton, strumming a ukelele, concludes his song.

BOBBY

Can you believe this shit?

He takes a drink from a half pint of bard liquor, then angrily hits at the steering wheel.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Goddamned freeway... Jesus
Christ...

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD

A few cars ahead, a truck can be seen carrying several furniture pieces protected by padded covers.

ELTON

Give 'em the horn, Bob.

BOBBY

Look at these assholes! What the hell are they doing?!

EXT. FREEWAY JAM - DAY

The assholes are going nowhere and other cars close up behind and to both sides of Bobby's car.

INT. BOBBY'S CAR - FREEWAY - DAY

He suddenly throws the car into "park"...

BOBBY

I can't take this shit anymore.

... opens the door and gets out.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

ON BOBBY

moving down the freeway, away from his car. Behind, Elton can be seen sliding over into the driver's seat.

ANOTHER ANGLE

as Bobby steps up onto the fender of a car, looking for the cause of the jam.

DRIVER

Hey, get off my car!

INT. BOBBY'S CAR - FREEWAY - DAY

ON ELTON

ELTON

Where the hell's he goin'?

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

Bobby cuts in front of another car and climbs up into the rear of the truck. Moving to the front of it, he looks out over the cab.

POV of the glut of cars in all four lanes.

ELTON

Hey, Bob! Come on! Quit foolin' around!

EXT. TRUCK - FREEWAY - DAY

On his way out of the truck, Bobby pauses to look beneath one of the padded protectors, then pulls it off to reveal an upright piano. He leans down to the keyboard and plays a few notes.

INT. BOBBY'S CAR - FREEWAY - DAY

Elton, amused.

ELTON

Shit, what's he doin'?

EXT. TRUCK - FREEWAY - DAY

Bobby has pulled the bench out from beneath the piano and, sitting himself, begins to play a Chopin prelude.

EXT. BOBBY'S CAR - FREEWAY - DAY

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD

Elton can be seen applauding him.

EXT. TRUCK - FREEWAY - DAY

ON BOBBY

playing as the traffic begins to move and the truck with it.

INT. BOBBY'S CAR - FREEWAY - DAY

Again, Elton leans out the window, yelling at him:

ELTON

You better get your butt off there, Bob! Come on, now!!

EXT. TRUCK - FREEWAY - DAY

The right-turn indicator is flashing and the truck begins to work its way across the lanes.

INT. BOBBY'S CAR - FREEWAY - DAY

ELTON'S POV

of Bobby playing, as the truck heads for an off ramp.

ON ELTON

honking the horn and flailing his arm out the window as he tries to cross lanes. The traffic closes on his right, preventing him from following.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

ANGLE INCLUSIVE OF ELTON

hemmed into the left-hand lanes, and the truck, with Bobby still playing, pulling away on the off ramp.

EXT. TRUCK - LONG BEACH STREETS - DAY

(CHOPIN PRELUDE OVER:)

The truck slows and comes to a stop at a signal. Bobby jumps out and moves to the sidewalk.

FOLLOWING with him as he wanders, boozed and aimless, along the dispirited cheap streets of the city.

INT. DINER - LATE NIGHT

Rayette clears some plates from an empty table and, crossing the diner, sees...

... Bobby entering. As he takes a seat at the counter, she goes about her tasks, ignoring him.

He watches her as she moves to the only other customer and totals his bill.

Another waitress appears with a coffee Silex. She gestures it at Bobby and he nods. As she pours him

a cup, Rayette moves to the register, deposits some bills, then turns and exits to the kitchen.

EXT. REAR OF DINER - LATE NIGHT

Bobby leans against a pickup adjacent to Rayette's car.

She comes out of the rear door of the diner, hesitates as she sees him, then moves past him to her car.

BOBBY

I was with Elton last night, Ray.

Maintaining her attitude of suffered injustice, she reaches to the car door and opens it.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

It's the truth.

He reaches behind her and pushes the door shut. Then gently taking hold of her arm, he turns her toward him, bringing his face close to hers...

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Rayette...

... and as she turns away, he begins to kiss her neck. She lowers her gaze to the ground, quietly uttering:

RAYETTE

You son of a bitch.

INT. ELTON AND STONEY'S MOBILE HOME - NIGHT

Bobby, Elton and Stoney are seated on the couch, all looking toward the TV, playing an old black-and white.

Rayette is seated on an adjacent chair, holding an infant in her lap, cooing and fawning over it throughout the following.

ELTON

I swore to God I'd never hire on to this type a work again. Christ, I don't know how the hell I let you talk me into it...

Rayette reaches over to Bobby.

RAYETTE

Give me a swig, hon'.

He hands her his beer and as she takes a sip and hands it back:

ELTON

You didn' know I was a derrickman once, did you?

Bobby shakes his head.

ELTON (CONT'D)

Down in the southern fields, an' man, did I hate it. An' Stoney's brother was a well-puller, wad'n he, honey? The one with three fingers?

STONEY

(her eyes on the TV)
My brother Crusier, yeah...

ELTON

I once hung suspended 90 feet up on a tour, like a damn circus artist...

RAYETTE

Honey, took at this little bugger.

ELTON

Near broke my damn neck...

RAYETTE

Id'n he the cutest little guy?

BOBBY

Very cute... Put it down, an' let's go.

Elton turns to him with a gap-toothed smile:

ELTON

You know, you oughta get you one them things, Bob.

ON BOBBY

as he stands up...

BOBBY
(standing up)
Yeah...
(stretching his arms)
An' I oughta live in a trailer park
with my front teeth poked out...

EXT. SIGNAL HILL RIG - DAY

ON ELTON

seated on the rig floor opposite Bobby, who eats a sandwich, as:

ELTON
Well, what if she was, Bob? I can't
see nothin' so bad in it...

Bobby scowls hostilely at him.

ELTON (CONT'D)
What if I was to let you in on the
little fact that she is.

He looks away from Elton, not wanting to hear.

ELTON (CONT'D)
That's right. She told me. An'
she's all tore up about it, which I
hate a see.

ON BOBBY

as he continues:

ELTON
Hell, id'n it just somethin' to
face up to? I'll tell you,
somewhere along the line, you even
get to likin' the whole idea...

ON ELTON

ELTON
I recall when Stoney first give me
the news, I could a shit...

Bobby throws his sandwich onto the rig floor near
Elton's leg. He looks down at a spatter of
mayonnaise on his pants.

ELTON

Well, id'n that nice.

BOBBY

(attacking the messenger)

It's ridiculous! I'm sitting here,
listening to some asshole cracker
compare his life to mine!

He spills out the remainder of coffee from his cup
and screws it onto the top of a thermos.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Just keep telling me about the good
life, Elton, if you want a see me
puke my lunch!

Elton reaches down and wipes the mayonnaise off his
pant leg.

ELTON

If you're sayin' you're somethin'
better'n what I am, that's one
thing. But I can't say much a
someone who'd run off an' leave a
woman in a situation like this an'
feel easy about it. An' that's all
I gotta say.

BOBBY

I hope that's all you gotta say,
El, 'cause I'm about as tired of
your mouth as I am workin' this
stinkin' hole!

He grabs his jacket and his lunch bucket, jumps
down off the rig and begins walking toward his car
parked by the Field Office.

In the b.g., Elton gets up and hurls his hard hat
toward Bobby.

ELTON

Shit ass!!

As he approaches his car, he looks toward the
Field Office, where...

... The driller is leaning down to a car with TWO
MEN in it.

ON BOBBY

calling over to him:

BOBBY

Hey, Longcipher! I'm quitting!

The driller gestures a direction to the driver of the car, and as it pulls off, he moves toward the office:

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Longcipher! I'm talking to you!

The driller opens the office door and looks back to Bobby.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Did you hear me?! I said I'm quitting!

DRILLER

I don't give a shit what you do. You ben more trouble than you're worth, an' I'm damn glad to be rid of both a you assholes.

He goes into the office and closes the door.

ON BOBBY

throwing his jacket and his lunch bucket into his car. As he starts to get in, his attention is drawn back to the rig.

POV:

The car that held the two men is parked next to it, and both men are on the rig platform moving toward Elton. He backs away from them, breaks toward the rig tower and starts to climb it. One of the men catches hold of his leg and yanks him back. Elton pulls loose from him, jumps to the ground and begins running with both men in pursuit.

BOBBY

Hey! What's goin' on?!

He starts sprinting back to the rig.

The first man has a hold on Elton and is struggling to subdue him. He is joined by the second man, and as they force his arms behind his back and cuff his wrists...

... Bobby MOVES INTO FRAME, grabbing onto the first man and wrestling him away from Elton.

ELTON

Don't do that, Bob!! It's the Law!

Bobby hurls the man onto the ground and turns around to go after the second man, struggling with Elton.

ELTON (CONT'D)

It's the Law, Bob, don't mix in!

The second man pushes Elton aside and as Bobby throws a punch at him...

ELTON (CONT'D)

Look out behind!

... the other grabs him from behind, holding him, while the second man jams a fist into his stomach and, as he doubles over, follows with a violent chop to the back of his neck.

Bobby slumps to the ground, and as the first man puts a knee into his back and prepares to handcuff him:

ELTON (CONT'D)

Hey, don't do that. Don't you think you could just leave him...

The second man takes hold of Elton and starts to move him off.

ELTON

Sure as hell he wouldn' a done that if he'd known who you was... Would you, Bob?

Bobby, dazed, raises his head from the dirt, looking toward Elton.

BOBBY

Christ Almighty, what's happening here?

SECOND MAN

Okay, let him go.

As he starts pushing a resistant Elton toward the car, Bobby sits up.

BOBBY

Tell me what in the hell's going on, Elton!

ELTON

I got accused a robbin' a fillin' station down in the Indian Nation, didn' I tell you...

SECOND MAN

Come on.

ELTON

I got wild an' jumped my bail...

SECOND MAN

Move it!

He takes him roughly by the arm and moves off with the first man following.

ELTON

(over his shoulder, to Bobby)

An' here they come runnin' after me a year later... Ain't that somethin'?

ON BOBBY

looking toward:

The two men forcing Elton into the rear seat of the car, as he calls back to Bobby:

ELTON

Tell Stoney for me, will you?! Tell her to come get me...

They close the door on him and get into the car. As it drives off...

Bobby sits watching until it disappears from sight, then he sits back against a pump casing and drops

his head onto his chest.

INT. TWINKY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CLOSE ON TWINKY'S FACE

She opens her mouth and rends the air with a keening wail. Her face beads with moisture and journeys through expressions indistinguishable from grief and anguish. Presently, an ecstatic and very professional screech issues from her, after which she reaches up and pulls Bobby down onto her, breathing into his ear...

TWINKY

Donnie, oh Donnie...

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

(BACH PARTITA FAINTLY UNDER:)

Bobby, dressed in a suit and tie, moves through a network of hallways, checking the door numbers.

He arrives at a door designated as Studio A, and, after hesitating for a moment, opens it and steps inside.

INT. STUDIO A RECORDING BOOTH - DAY

(BACH PARTITA UNDER:)

TWO RECORDING ENGINEERS glance at him without interest and return to their dials and needles.

Bobby looks from them through the glass partition to the recording studio in view beyond.

POV:

ELIZABETH "TITA" DUPEA is at the piano, intensely into the Bach. She wears a monastic-looking dress, her unruly hair is pinned back from her face, and her glasses lie on the bench beside her.

ON BOBBY

watching her with both affection and appreciation.

ON TITA

She is "sounding" as she plays, in tones out-of-key and discordant with the Bach.

FIRST ENGINEER

There she goes again.

Bobby glances over at him, then looks back to Tita.

POV:

She hunches over the keyboard and plays an arpeggio, humming a long monochromatic note.

SECOND ENGINEER

My 1-year-old can carry a tune better than that.

Bobby is about to defend her, when the engineer flips a toggle switch and addresses the mike feeding into the studio:

SECOND ENGINEER (CONT'D)

Miss Dupea.

There is no response and she continues playing.

SECOND ENGINEER (CONT'D)

(more emphatic)

Miss Dupea.

TITA

(annoyed)

Yes.

Bobby can be seen in the b.g., having difficulty restraining his irritation under the following:

SECOND ENGINEER

I'd like to remind you again, this isn't an opera or a musical comedy.

TITA

Oh... I'm sorry. Was I singing again?

SECOND ENGINEER

If you want to call it that.

TITA

Well, you have to simply tell me, that's all.

SECOND ENGINEER

That's exactly what I am doing,
again.

TITA

Do you have to let me get halfway
through the movement first? This is
tiring me.

SECOND ENGINEER

I have a suggestion. Why don't we
take a break.

TITA

Oh, for pity's sake...

She puts her elbows on top of the piano and drops
her head into her hands.

FIRST ENGINEER

Is she going to cry again?

TITA

I don't want to take a break.

SECOND ENGINEER

What would you like in your coffee?

She makes a mumbled response, her head still in her
hands:

TITA

Tea.

BOBBY

Would you tell her Bobby's here?

SECOND ENGINEER

(to the mike)

Miss Dupea, Bobby's here.

She raises her head, squints toward the booth, then
grabs her glasses from the bench and puts them on.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

Bobby enters the studio and comes toward her,
opening his arms. She rushes into his embrace,
burying her face in his shoulder.

TITA
(very emotional)
Oh my goodness... Bobby...

BOBBY
Hi, Tita.

She raises her head to look at him, and verging on tears:

TITA
Robert Eroica...

BOBBY
Now don't...

TITA
No, I'm not...
(taking a deep breath,
then:)
I'm not.

BOBBY
That's good.

A NEW ANGLE

Tita sits on the piano bench, crying and searching through her purse for a tissue. Bobby hovers behind her, gently patting her on the back and glancing with some embarrassment toward the recording booth.

TITA
I just can't look at you.

BOBBY
Don't, then.

As she blows her nose into the tissue, a young man comes into view, hands Bobby a paper cup and leaves. Tita takes another tissue from her purse and dabs at her eyes.

TITA
You always do this to me.

BOBBY
Well, I don't mean to.
(setting the cup down on
the piano)
Here's your tea, Tita.

TITA

Thank you...

(then:)

Oh no, don't put it on there...

She quickly picks up the cup and places it on the floor.

BOBBY

Sorry.

TITA

(caressing the piano)

This is a very special, very old CB
275...

BOBBY

Oh.

TITA

You know who it once belonged to?

BOBBY

No.

TITA

Waldnit von Schnechter. Prewar.

BOBBY

(politely)

No kidding.

He sits down on the bench beside her...

TITA

It has absolutely no objectionable
idiosyncrasies...

... and tests it out with a brief flourish on the
keys. She watches him, then:

TITA (CONT'D)

Robert...

BOBBY

(stops playing)

Very nice.

TITA

I have to talk seriously with

you...

BOBBY

Everybody still up on the Island?

TITA

Well, Herbert's mostly on the mainland because of the orchestra, so at the moment, there's just Daddy, Carl and myself... and Van Oost.

BOBBY

Who's Van Oost?

TITA

(not fond of the subject)
Catherine -- she's a pianist. She's working with Carl.

BOBBY

Carl's a fiddler. What's he doing coaching piano?

TITA

Well, 11 months ago he was on his bicycle, on his way to the post office in La Roche... and he ran into a Jeep and sprained his neck...

Bobby laughs.

BOBBY

Sprained his neck?

Tita laughs, then:

TITA

It's not funny. He permanently sprained his neck, and since then it's been extremely difficult for him to tuck the violin.

BOBBY

Crashes into a Jeep and totals his neck.

(shaking his head)

That's Carl...

TITA

Robert, I have to tell you something...

BOBBY
What?

TITA
Daddy's very ill.

BOBBY
Oh, well, what, what's he...

TITA
He's had two strokes.

He looks away from her, not wanting to hear any more.

TITA (CONT'D)
He's not... They feel he... maybe he might not recover, and that he'll either...

BOBBY
(standing up)
Don't tell me about this...

He moves away from the piano and Tita turns to look at him.

TITA
But don't you think it's right, though, that you should see him, at least once...

SECOND ENGINEER'S VOICE
(miked)
We're ready Miss Dupea.

TITA
(to the booth)
Just a minute, please!
(to Bobby)
Robert, don't you think it's right that you should see him?

He moves aimlessly about trying to subdue his anguish.

BOBBY
Yeah... I guess so...

TITA

I'm going back up tonight. Will you go with me?

BOBBY

No...

He glances at her, catching her profound disappointment.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

I'd rather drive up myself and... maybe go into Canada after... And I can't stay long, Tita, probably a week, at the most.

TITA

I know.

He looks toward the booth.

BOBBY

Well...

(then, to Tita)

I better let you...

TITA

Wait...

She gets up from the bench and goes to him, taking hold of his arm.

TITA (CONT'D)

I'll walk out with you...

As they move to the hall door, she addresses the booth:

TITA (CONT'D)

I'll be back in two minutes!

SECOND ENGINEER'S VOICE

Cut that in half, will you?

She smiles at Bobby as they go out into hall.

TITA

They hate me, I feel.

FOLLOWING WITH THEM

down the hallway.

BOBBY

Maybe you better stay, then.

TITA

No, I need to talk to you, about so many things...

BOBBY

Well, I'll be seeing you in a couple of days, won't I?

They stop at the stairway.

TITA

Oh God, I'm so glad, Robert, that you're coming...

BOBBY

Yeah, me, too...

TITA

It'll be so good for you, and for Daddy, because you know, you've never really...

BOBBY

(cutting her off)
Tita, I've got to go...

TITA

All right...

He kisses her.

TITA (CONT'D)

Okay.

Feeling herself about to break down again, she attempts a valiant smile and stands watching as...

... Bobby turns and goes down the stairs.

EXT. RAYETTE'S HOUSE - DAY

(TAMMY WYNETTE'S "D-I-V-O-R-C-E" OVER:)

ON BOBBY

moving from his car, up the walkway and entering Rayette's house.

INT. RAYETTE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

ON THE STEREO

playing the above song.

ON BOBBY

looking from...

... a rumpled blanket on the couch, to...

... a can of beer and a lighted cigarette burning in an ashtray on the coffee table.

BOBBY

(calling out)

Hello?!

He crosses to a hall and moves down toward the bedroom.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

You have the day off?!

He steps into the doorway, to see:

Rayette, lying in bed, her back against the pillows, staring at the wall.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Are you sick?

No response.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

You heard about Elton, I guess.

She turns her gaze to the window. He looks at her briefly, then:

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Okay, I get your point.

As he moves to the closet:

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Hope you didn't strain yourself,

getting in here and into your pose
before I hit the door.

He picks up a suitcase from the closet floor, grabs
some of his clothes from the rack, and, moving to a
chair, sets the suitcase on it and begins packing.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

I have to go home. My father's
sick.

Rayette turns on her side, making a snorting sound
of disbelief.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Yeah, it's very funny.

He moves to a dresser, extracts his underwear and
returns to the suitcase.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

I'll be gone two or three weeks.

RAYETTE

(not looking at him)

You'll be gone, period.

He closes the suitcase, secures it...

BOBBY

I'll try and call you from up
there.

... and picking it up, moves around the bed toward
the door. He stops, setting the suitcase on the bed
and looking down at her.

She is still faced away from him, her shoulders
trembling as she weeps soundlessly.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

(very emotional)

Come on, DiPesto. I never told you
it would work out to anything. Did
I?

He looks away from her, to the window.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

I'll send you some money, that's
all I can do.

Returning his gaze to her:

BOBBY (CONT'D)

And... I'll call you, like I
said...

(he pauses, then)

Bye, Ray.

An audible sob finally comes from her. Bobby quickly picks up the suitcase and moves out of the bedroom and down the hall.

EXT. RAYETTE'S HOUSE - DAY

ON BOBBY'S CAR

as he moves into view. He throws the suitcase in through the rear window, moves around to the driver's side and gets in.

INT. BOBBY'S CAR - DAY

He starts the motor, angrily throws it into gear and places his hands on the wheel.

INT. RAYETTE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

BOBBY'S HAND slashes at the arm of the record player, pulling it across the grooves and stifling Tammy Wynette.

BOBBY

Do you want to go with me, Ray?

EXT. BOBBY'S CAR - HIGHWAY - DAY

(WYNETTE'S "WHEN THERE'S A FIRE IN YOUR HEART"
OVER:)

His car moves north along the Pacific Coast Highway.

INT. BOBBY'S CAR - HIGHWAY - DAY

(WYNETTE OVER:)

ON BOBBY

looking over at Rayette and smiling.

ON RAYETTE

She returns his look with absolute devotion, then reaches over and caresses the back of his neck.

EXT. BOBBY'S CAR - INLAND HIGHWAY - DAY

(WYNETTE OVER:)

OUT PAST Bobby's profile, to a Southern California pastoral landscape passing by.

INT. BOBBY'S CAR - BIG SUR COUNTRY - DAY

ON RAYETTE

singing the above song.

RAYETTE

"There's been hot spells/An' cold
spells ever since we met/I've seen
your small fires/Your big fires/But
I won't give up yet/Oh someday
you'll yearn/'Cause your heart's
gonna burn/For that old familiar
glow/You'll be burned..."

Bobby laughs and she looks over at him.

RAYETTE (CONT'D)

You like it?

BOBBY

I love it.

RAYETTE

(resumes singing)

"You'll be burned out/Or smoked
out/An' come back to me, I know..."

Bobby's attention is taken by something on the road ahead.

RAYETTE (CONT'D)

"Every trail that you blaze/Makes
me..."

BOBBY

What the hell is that?

POV THROUGH WINDSHIELD

of a car lying upside down on the left side of the highway.

TWO FIGURES are standing beside it, engaged in a heated argument.

RAYETTE

Is it an accident?

EXT. BOBBY'S CAR - HIGHWAY - DAY

Bobby pulls off onto the right-hand shoulder, stops the car and gets out. He moves out to the center line, looking across the road, to:

A long-haired young woman (PALM) in Levi's and parka, presently pushing her close-cropped, boyish looking friend (TERRY) against the side of the car and making some indecipherable accusation.

BOBBY

Hey! What's going on, what's the trouble?!

The young woman turns and gives him the finger.

PALM

Rotate, mack!

ON RAYETTE

sticking her head out the driver's window.

RAYETTE

What'd she say?

ON PALM

gesturing angrily back at the wreck as she crosses toward Bobby.

PALM

Look at my car! Piece of shit! I just bought it brand new from a used-car lot, and the steering goes to the pot on me!

BOBBY

You're lucky no one was hurt.

PALM

Seven hundred dollars, down the toilet! I'd like to go back and punch the son of a bitch out! Can you give us a lift?

Without waiting for a response, she moves back to Terry, who is retrieving some of their belongings from the highway.

PALM (CONT'D)

Come on, Terry, we got a ride!

RAYETTE

Jesus, what a rude person...

INT. BOBBY'S CAR - ON THE ROAD - DAY

Palm and Terry, still under the spell of their roadside tiff, sit in sulky silence in the back seat.

Bobby glances at Palm in the rear view.

BOBBY

What's your name?

PALM

Palm Apodaca.

Rayette turns around and, thinking Terry is a boy, asks rather flirtatiously:

RAYETTE

An' what's your name?

TERRY

Terry Grouse.

Shocked at the female voice coming from "him," she turns back around and pokes Bobby on the leg.

BOBBY

(loudly)
What?

RAYETTE

(low tones)
I'll tell you...
(spelling out)
... l-a-t-e-r.

PALM

How far are you going to?

BOBBY

Washington.

PALM

We'll get off in Washington and
hook another ride.

BOBBY

Where are you going?

PALM

Alaska.

BOBBY

Alaska? Are you on vacation?

TERRY

(sullenly)

She wants to live there, because
she thinks it's cleaner.

BOBBY

Cleaner than what?

PALM

(to Terry)

You don't have to tell everybody
about it. Pretty soon they'll all
go there and it won't be so clean.

BOBBY

How do you know it's clean?

PALM

I saw a picture of it. Alaska is
very clean. It appeared to look
very white to me... Don't you
think?

BOBBY

Yeah. That's before the big thaw.

She leans forward, looking annoyed.

PALM

Before the what?

EXT. BOBBY'S CAR - NORTHERN HIGHWAY - DAY

(COUNTRY & WESTERN INSTRUMENTAL OVER:)

ON THE CAR

moving through the Redwood country above San Francisco.

INT. BOBBY'S CAR - HIGHWAY - DAY

ON BOBBY

bored, as he drives. Beside him, Rayette primps in the sunvisor mirror.

ON THE BACK SEAT

Terry lights a cigarette while Palm, staring morosely out the window, goes into a soliloquy:

PALM

I had to leave this place. I got depressed, seeing all the crap. And the thing is, they're making more crap, you know? They've got so many stores and stuff and junk full of crap, I can't believe it.

BOBBY

Who?

PALM

Who? People, that's who! Pretty soon there won't be room for anyone.

They're selling more crap that people go and buy than you can imagine. Oofh! Crap! I believe everybody should have a big hole where they throw in all this stuff and burn it.

Rayette leans around to her.

RAYETTE

There'd never be a hole big enough. Now took at me, for instance, when I was just one person, before Bobby, I had so much garbage collectin' onto me every day, I was

thinkin' about gettin a dispose
all...

PALM

A dispose-all, what's that but more
crap? I've never seen such crap.
Oofh, I don't know how people get
up in the morning.

TERRY

Mass production is what does it.

PALM

What do you mean "mass"... I have
to come out and tell you, you're
not that clean, either.

TERRY

Wait a minute. I'm not that neat,
maybe, but I am clean.

PALM

Well, you're not that bad, but some
people... I mean, people's homes,
just filth. I've been in people's
homes...

TERRY

In my personal observation, I think
that more people are neat than are
clean...

PALM

In my personal thing, I don't see
that. I'm seeing more filth. A lot
of filth. What they need to do
every day, no, once in a while, is
a cockroach thing, where they spray
the homes. And uh...
can you imagine, if their doors
were painted a pretty color, and
they had a pot outside, with...

TERRY

Yeah, it could be adorable...

PALM

And they picked up! I mean, it
wouldn't be filthy, with Coke
bottles and whiskey, and those
signs everywhere...

She gestures angrily out the window at the roadside billboards.

PALM (CONT'D)

... they oughta be erased! All those signs, selling crap, and more crap, and, I don't know, it's disgusting, I don't even want to talk about it!

Bobby starts to say something:

BOBBY

Well...

PALM

It's just filthy. People are dirty. I think that's the biggest thing that's wrong with people. I think they wouldn't be as violent if they were clean, because then they wouldn't have anybody to pick on... Oofh... Dirt...

RAYETTE

Well...

PALM

Not dirt. See, dirt isn't bad. It's filth. Filth is bad. That's what starts maggots and riots...

She suddenly leans over to the front seat, pointing to a semi ahead.

PALM (CONT'D)

Hey, follow that truck. They know the best places to stop.

RAYETTE

That's an old maid's tale.

PALM

Bullshit! Truck drivers know the best eating places on the road.

Rayette turns around, asserting:

RAYETTE

Salesmen and cops are the ones. If

you'd ever waitressed, honey, you'd know.

PALM

Don't call me "honey," mack.

RAYETTE

Don't call me "mack," honey.

PALM

I wouldn't be a waitress. They're nasty and full of crap.

RAYETTE

You better hold onto your tongue!

PALM

(giving her the finger)
Hold onto this.

Terry laughs.

RAYETTE

Just one minute, you! Don't you ever talk to me like that!

BOBBY

Shut up! All of you!

INT. ROADSIDE CAFE - DAY

All four are seated at a booth. The women have given their orders and a WAITRESS stands above Bobby, waiting for his:

BOBBY

(looking at his menu)
I'll have an omelette, no potatoes.
Give me tomatoes instead, and wheat toast instead of rolls.

The waitress indicates something on the menu with the butt of her pencil.

WAITRESS

No substitutions.

BOBBY

What does that mean? You don't have any tomatoes?

WAITRESS

(annoyed)

No. We have tomatoes.

BOBBY

But I can't have any. Is that what you mean?

WAITRESS

Only what's on the menu...

(again, indicating with her pencil)

A Number Two: Plain omelette. It comes with cottage fries and rolls.

BOBBY

I know what it comes with, but that's not what I want.

WAITRESS

I'll come back when you've made up your mind...

She starts to move away and Bobby detains her.

BOBBY

Wait, I've made up my mind. I want a plain omelette, forget the tomatoes, don't put potatoes on the plate, and give me a side of wheat toast and a cup of coffee.

WAITRESS

I'm sorry, we don't have side orders of toast. I can give you an English muffin or a coffee roll.

BOBBY

What do you mean, you don't have side orders of toast? You make sandwiches, don't you?

WAITRESS

Would you like to talk to the manager?

PALM

Hey, mack!

BOBBY

(to Palm)

Shut up.

(to the waitress)

You have bread, don't you, and a toaster of some kind?

WAITRESS

I don't make the rules.

BOBBY

Okay, I'll make it as easy for you as I can. Give me an omelette, plain, and a chicken salad sandwich on wheat toast -- no butter, no mayonnaise, no lettuce -- and a cup of coffee.

She begins writing down his order, repeating it sarcastically:

WAITRESS

One Number Two, and a chicken sandwich -- hold the butter, the mayo, the lettuce -- and a cup of coffee... Anything else?

BOBBY

Now all you have to do is hold the chicken, bring me the toast, charge me for the sandwich, and you haven't broken any rules.

WAITRESS

(challenging him)

You want me to hold the chicken.

BOBBY

Yeah. I want you to hold it between your knees.

The other three laugh, and the waitress points to a "Right to Refuse" sign above the counter.

WAITRESS

You see that sign, sir?!

Bobby glances over at it, then back to her.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)

You'll all have to leave, I'm not taking any more of your smartness and your sarcasm!

He smiles politely at her, then:

BOBBY

You see this sign?

He reaches his arm out and "clears" the table for her.

INT. BOBBY'S CAR - ON THE ROAD - DAY

ON PALM

in the back seat.

PALM

Fantastic! That you could figure all that out, and lay that down on her, to come up with a way you could get your toast.

BOBBY

I didn't get it, did I?

PALM

No, but it was very clever... I would of just punched her out.

EXT. BOBBY'S CAR - HIGHWAY - DAY

(COUNTRY & WESTERN OVER:)

ON THE CAR

moving through the Northwest coastal region.

INT. BOBBY'S CAR - HIGHWAY - DAY

Palm resumes her monologue:

PALM

People... Oofh...

(shaking her head in utter disgust)

Animals are not like that...

They're always cleaning themselves.

Did you ever see... What are they called? Pigeons!

She looks over at Terry, slumped in her seat, asleep.

PALM (CONT'D)

He's always picking on himself and his friends. They're always picking bugs out of their hair...

ON RAYETTE

asleep.

PALM (O.S.)

Monkeys, too.

ON PALM

PALM

Except monkeys do things out in the open that I don't go for.

ON BOBBY

benumbed, his eyes glazed over as he stares out through the windshield.

ON PALM

PALM

I was in this place once, this store, with snakes, monkeys, everything you could imagine. I walked in, I had to run out. It stunk! They didn't even have an incense going...

Though no one listens, she goes on, working herself up:

PALM

And you know, I read where they invented this car that runs on... that runs on... when you boil water...

TERRY

(half-dead)

Steam.

PALM

Right, steam. A car you could ride around in and not cause a stink. But do you know, they will not even

let us have it. Can you believe it?
Why?! Man! He likes to create a
stink. I wrote them a note once,
and told them to clean it... I
mean, don't you see that? It's just
filthy! I mean, I've seen filth you
wouldn't believe! Oofh, what a
stink! I don't even want to talk
about it...

EXT. BOBBY'S CAR - TWO-LANE HIGHWAY - LATE DAY

(WYNETTE'S "WHEN THERE'S A FIRE" OVER:)

ON PALM AND TERRY

deposited at the side of the highway, with their
luggage, duffle bags and television set lying on
the road edge. Terry lifts a bored hand to wave
at...

... Bobby, behind the wheel. He waves back, pulls
out onto the highway and drives off.

EXT. BOBBY'S CAR - MOTEL - NIGHT

(MUSIC FADES, AS:)

The car pulls into a motel parking slot and stops.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Bobby and Rayette in bed. She lies on her side,
watching him watch TV. After a moment:

RAYETTE

Are you depressed about your daddy,
honey?

BOBBY

No.

RAYETTE

I 'magine it's me then, id'n it?

BOBBY

Is what you?

RAYETTE

You're depressed that I come along.

BOBBY

Who said I was depressed?

RAYETTE

Well, is that a happy face I see?

No response.

RAYETTE (CONT'D)

'Cause if it was me, I could just catch a Greyhound back.

BOBBY

Oh, you're not going to kill yourself this time. I wish I'd known...

He turns off the light on the night stand and rolls onto his side, faced away from her.

They lie silently in the dark for a moment. Then:

RAYETTE

I don't know if I'm gonna be able to sleep or not.

No response.

RAYETTE (CONT'D)

(looking over at him)
Hint, hint.

No response.

RAYETTE (CONT'D)

(sighing; then:)
I guess I'll just have to count the sheep.
(closing her eyes)
One-two-three-four...

She opens her eyes and looks over at him.

RAYETTE (CONT'D)

Seven... eight...
(caressing his shoulder)
Look at this old cold shoulder,
what am I gonna do with it?

He looks around at her and with gentle good humor:

BOBBY

If you just wouldn't open your mouth, everything would be fine.

She turns an imaginary key at her lips.

RAYETTE

Tick a lock.

He rolls over to face her and, yielding to her request, begins to make love to her.

EXT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Rayette following after Bobby. As he moves to his car, he removes some cash from his wallet.

RAYETTE

Why can't I go out to your folks' house? Give me one good reason.

BOBBY

I have to see how things are first. My father's sick, you understand? They wouldn't be prepared for me bringing anyone.

He holds out a roll of bills and as she takes them:

RAYETTE

So how long am I supposed to sit an' twiddle my thumbs in this place?

BOBBY

If you can't do what I ask, Ray, use that money to go back home, then.

RAYETTE

Bobby, don't talk like that...

She moves over to him and gives him a quick kiss.

RAYETTE (CONT'D)

It'll be all right, I'll get a hold a some magazines an' things like that. An' maybe find a beauty salon an' get my hair fixed, okay?

ON BOBBY

getting into the car.

BOBBY

Okay, Ray...

RAYETTE

Or maybe sit out by the pool an'
get myself nice an' tan for you.
Would you like that?

BOBBY

(starting the engine)

Sure...

RAYETTE

It brings out my eyes...

BOBBY

Bye, honey, I'll call you in a
couple of days.

RAYETTE

Okay...

She watches unhappily as he backs out of the slot
and the car pulls away.

RAYETTE (CONT'D)

Bye, baby...

EXT. FERRY (CROSSING) - DAY

Bobby gets out of his car and wanders the deck of
the ferry. He stops to look out over the Sound to
one of the islands off the Washington coast, then
glances back to the mainland, receding in the
distance.

EXT. BOBBY'S CAR - FERRY LANDING - DAY

Bobby drives off the ferry onto the island.

EXT. BOBBY'S CAR - COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

The car moves over a tree-lined country lane and
presently turns off onto a private road, leading to
a large Victorian-style house. It pulls to a stop
behind two other cars.

Bobby gets out of the car and moves up the porch

steps to the front door.

CLOSER ON him as he hesitates, listening briefly to the FAINT SOUND of two pianos coming from within.

Then he opens the door and goes inside.

INT. DUPEA HOME - DAY

(TWO PIANOS OVER:)

Bobby tentatively wanders the first floor of the house, taking in the ghosts of the past.

In the living room, he pauses at a table to look at several framed photographs. He picks up one of his mother and father, looks closely at it, then gently returns it to its place and resumes wandering.

He stops at the music room and looks in through the half-opened door:

POV INTO MUSIC ROOM:

On the far side of the room, near windows which give view to a verdant exterior, are two concert grands. His brother CARL is seated at one of the pianos, and a young woman (CATHERINE VAN OOST) is seated at the other.

ON BOBBY

looking from Carl, to Catherine. He watches her briefly, then steps out of the doorway...

... and moves down a hallway to a closed door. He reaches down and opens it, looking inside to:

TITA

grooming the hair of an elderly man (NICHOLAS DUPEA) seated in a wheelchair with his back to Bobby.

She looks up and, seeing Bobby, smiles happily, then reaches down and turns the wheelchair around.

ON NICHOLAS

His eyes are half-closed and are cast down to the floor.

Bobby moves over to him, bending down and looking into his face. Nicholas opens his eyes slightly and gazes through Bobby into an absolute elsewhere.

Bobby raises his eyes to Tita.

BOBBY

He doesn't even know who the hell I am.

INT. DUPEA DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Nicholas Dupea sits at the head of the table, being fed his dinner by a male nurse (SPICER).

Bobby, at the opposite end of the table, is seated next to Tita. Unable to bear looking at his father, he glances over at Catherine, seated next to Carl on his right.

She raises her eyes from her plate to ask him something, just as Tita is moved to reminisce:

TITA

Remember, Bobby, what mother used to say when...

CATHERINE

(to Bobby)

How long have you been...

(To Tita)

Oh, excuse me...

TITA

No, it's all right, you go ahead...

CATHERINE

I was just going to ask Robert how long he's been away from here.

BOBBY

Four or five years.

CARL

No, the last time was three years ago.

TITA

Oh no, it's been much more than that.

CARL

Away from the piano, Tita, you have no sense of time at all.

TITA

I don't think that's true.

CARL

It is true.

TITA

Besides being very rude.

CATHERINE

What have you been doing since then?

BOBBY

What have I been doing? Different things, different jobs, here and there. Nothing that interesting.

CATHERINE

And you no longer play at all?

Bobby starts to reply and is interrupted by:

CARL

You know, just after I came back off tour with the Betenthaller Quartet, Dad, myself and Herbert had a summit conference about you...

TITA

Oh, my, "a summit conference." I wonder where I was, polishing silver behind the coal bin.

CARL

I don't know where you were, penis envy.

TITA

I hope I didn't hear that.

CARL

At any rate, Dad wanted to hire a private detective to ferret you out, and I said, "What for?"

Whatever the hell he's doing, even if it's a completely wasteful escapade, it's entirely his business. Simple as that...

BOBBY

Well, I really appreciate it, Carl.

TITA

I don't think you should infer Daddy was wrong in front of him...

She looks at Spicer, pushing a spoon at Nicholas's closed mouth.

TITA (CONT'D)

Don't force him like that, Spicer.

Spicer lays the spoon down and begins eating his own dinner.

BOBBY

(to Catherine)

How long have you been staying here?

TITA

A couple of months.

He starts to ask another question and is again overridden by:

CARL

Did you hear about my misfortune, Robert?

BOBBY

What?

CARL

It's still nearly impossible for me to turn my neck. If I wanted to turn toward Catherine, for instance, I'd first have to twist the whole base of my body around...

(demonstrating)

... like this...

Tita gets up from the table and, taking her plate, exits to the kitchen. And as Carl readjusts himself in his chair and takes a sip from his wine glass,

Bobby looks at Catherine to find her looking at him. She quickly alters her gaze to Carl.

CATHERINE

I wouldn't mind doing a little work, if you're finished, and not too tired...

CARL

No, I'm finished...

(placing a hand on his stomach)

Satiety is my father and mother.

Finding he's amused himself and nobody else, he gets up and addresses Bobby.

CARL (CONT'D)

She's tremendously gifted, this girl.

BOBBY

(looking at her)

Is she?

Catherine stands up and, wanting to change the subject:

CATHERINE

Excuse me, I don't want to hear this...

She exits and Carl, on his way out, pauses at Bobby's chair.

CARL

I hope you feel at home, Robert.

(patting him on the shoulder)

I'm really glad you're here.

BOBBY

Thanks, Carl...

He looks down table to see Spicer stacking his plate onto Nicholas's and his eyes follow him as he, too, moves out of the dining room to the kitchen.

CLOSE ON BOBBY

in extreme discomfort at being left alone with his father. He looks down at his plate, poking at the remainder of his dinner, then braves a look down the table.

ON NICHOLAS

looking back at him, his eyes devoid of interest or cognition.

EXT. DUPEA GROUNDS - DAY

Bobby and Tita walk away from the house down toward the ocean. Accompanying them is a Borzoi hound belonging to her.

TITA

He has ways of communicating,
Robert. I can tell when he's
expressing approval or disapproval,
just from his eyes...

BOBBY

Uhm hmm. Some range.

TITA

It's not that bad.

BOBBY

Yes, it is. I can't take seeing
him, sitting there like a stone.

TITA

A week or two isn't going to ruin
your life, for Godsakes.

He doesn't respond.

TITA (CONT'D)

I mean, you think I'm that happy?

BOBBY

No, I don't.

(a pause, then:)

You should've left a long time ago.

TITA

We can't all get up and leave, can
we? I mean, there are certain needs
you have to respond to...

She stops walking and moves to one of the garden chairs, facing out toward the bay.

TITA (CONT'D)

And anyway, I want you to stay, so I can spend some time with you, and ask you some questions...

He leans his back against a tree.

BOBBY

What questions?

TITA

Well, do you -- I mean, have you enjoyed all these... strange things you've been doing?

BOBBY

Sometimes.

She stares at him for a moment, and taking note of it:

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Why? Am I some kind of freak to you or something?

TITA

No, no, I don't think that, I'm just curious about it...

(a pause)

Do you think I'm a freak?

BOBBY

Sort of.

She laughs.

TITA

Oh no... Why? What is it? The way I look?

BOBBY

No, I don't really think you're a freak.

TITA

I probably am, but I don't care. I mean, I wasn't that blessed to begin with, and when would I have

had time to make any
improvements...

BOBBY

What about Carl and Catherine? Is
he just coaching her, or what?

TITA

Constantly. Night and day. And
unless I get up before the birds, I
can't get in any practice time for
myself...

BOBBY

Uhm hmm.

TITA

Actually, it's very admirable, the
way she works. She'll probably be
enormously successful, because
she's attractive as well, not that
that's so important in music,
but...

BOBBY

You're attractive, Tita. If you
just did a little more with
yourself...

TITA

Like what?

BOBBY

Well, if you just maybe did
something with your hair, or...

TITA

Oh, let's not talk about my hair,
it does what it wants to, and
anyway, who cares, I want to talk
about you...

BOBBY

There's nothing to say, Tita...

He offers nothing further and looks out over the
bay. Then, after a brief silence:

TITA

Well, you're not going to run out
on me right away, are you?

BOBBY

I don't know.

INT. DUPEA HOME - DAY

Bobby strolls casually about the house - in truth, looking for an opportunity to run into Catherine.

He moves to the music room and looks inside.

THROUGH THE DOORWAY

Catherine can be seen, seated at the piano. Carl stands above her and they engage in some exchange about the score resting on the piano's music stand.

ON BOBBY

as he moves down the hallway and sees:

Spicer descending the staircase, with the brittle Nicholas in his arms.

He ducks into the nearest room to avoid them.

INT. DEN - DUPEA HOME - DAY

Tita, startled in the act of appraising herself in a mirror above the fireplace, turns around to Bobby:

TITA

Oh God, don't sneak up on me like that!

We see she wears a little make-up and has done something "different" with her hair.

BOBBY

Sorry.

He turns and exits the den.

EXT. DUPEA HOUSE - DAY

Bobby stands on the front porch, looking toward...

... Catherine coming up from the ocean. She wears a bathrobe over a wet bathing suit and carries a towel, and as she approaches:

CATHERINE

Hello...

BOBBY

I guess you fell in the water.

CATHERINE

(amused)

Yes, intentionally.

BOBBY

That's dangerous, you know.

CATHERINE

Swimming?

BOBBY

Playing piano all day and then jumping into cold water. You could get a cramp.

She laughs and begins drying her hair with a corner of the towel.

CATHERINE

I love to swim, and I don't mind the cold at all. It's invigorating.

BOBBY

Well, I wouldn't want to get too invigorated myself.

CATHERINE

Why?

BOBBY

What would I do with it? Run amok?

She comes up the stairs.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Besides piano and swimming, what else do you do?

CATHERINE

Well, there's fishing and boating. There's concerts on the mainland and... but I feel silly telling you. This is really your home. You probably know better than I what

there is to do.

BOBBY
Nothing.

CATHERINE
Nothing? Then it must be very boring for you here.

BOBBY
That's right. Have you anything to suggest?

CATHERINE
I don't know. Let me give it some thought.

She moves toward the front door, with Bobby following.

BOBBY
What're you doing right now...

INT. DUPEA HOME - DAY

Catherine comes inside and moves toward the stairway, with Bobby behind.

CATHERINE
Right now I'm going to run a hot tub and soak myself.

BOBBY
Then after that?

She goes up a few steps and turns back to him.

CATHERINE
After that, I plan to read some music and rest for awhile.

BOBBY
Tomorrow, then.

CATHERINE
Tomorrow's a full practice day...
(continues up the stairs)
But the day after is kind of open.

At the top of the stairs, she stops and looks down at him.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

Carl has hydrotherapy on Tuesdays.

BOBBY

(as if it were a year)

The day after tomorrow.

CATHERINE

If you're free.

BOBBY

Yeah, I'll probably be free.

She turns and disappears into the second-floor hallway.

INT. DUPEA KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dinner has concluded and Tita moves around the table, distributing cups and saucers. Carl is remote and off his feed. Spicer attends Nicholas, and Catherine looks across the table to Bobby as he drinks from a bottle of beer.

After a moment, a loud belch comes from Nicholas and Tita quickly requests:

TITA

Don't laugh...

She attempts to stifle her own amusement, as do Bobby and Catherine, then changes the subject:

TITA (CONT'D)

What's wrong, Carl, you hardly ate anything...

CARL

I took some aspirin and it really upset my stomach.

Catherine begins pouring the coffee.

CATHERINE

One thing that's hard to understand is how you could have this incredible background in music, and then just walk away from it, without a second thought...

BOBBY

I gave it a second thought.

Tita seats herself at the table, addressing Spicer:

TITA

He looks tired to me, Spicer. I think you should put him to bed.

He nods, and as he gets up and wheels Nicholas from the room:

CATHERINE

I mean, how could you not play anymore? That's so strange to me...

BOBBY

I have played a few times. Here and there. As a matter of fact, I was once a rehearsal pianist for a Las Vegas musical revue.

CATHERINE

You don't call that music, though.

BOBBY

Of course I do. It's music. You know...

He places his hands on the table and simulates the playing of a rousing production-type show-stopper, simultaneously vocalizing as he does.

Though Tita and Catherine are amused, Carl winces disapprovingly and breaks into Bobby's act:

CARL

Robert, do you mind?

BOBBY

What?

CARL

Nothing. Will you excuse us for a while?

He takes hold of Catherine's hand and stands up.

CATHERINE

We really don't have to, Carl, if you're not feeling good...

CARL

(a bit martyred)

Well, maybe if we put the
Thermaphore on me for a while,
first...

CATHERINE

Oh, all right.

And as they move to the door, she glances
apologetically back at Bobby.

Deflated and embarrassed, he looks away from Tita's
sympathetic gaze. After a brief silence, she
reaches to a platter on the table.

TITA

Do you want some gingerbread?

BOBBY

(elsewhere)

What?

TITA

With applesauce?

BOBBY

No, thanks...

INT. DUPEA LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Bobby stands in the living room. It is dark and the
only light comes from some burning logs in the
fireplace. He listens briefly to the sounds of a
Beethoven sonata coming from the music room...

... then moves to a chaise near the fireplace and
lies down, staring absently into the flames. After
a moment, he closes his eyes.

ANOTHER ANGLE

on his sleeping face as the sonata begins to FADE.

INT. DUPEA LIVING ROOM - MORNING

ON BOBBY

still asleep in the chaise. He is suddenly jolted
awake by a loud thud and sits up, looking out the
window to:

POV OF SPICER

lifting a barbell with heavy weights attached to it. He does a series of vigorous presses with it, before he again lets the bar drop heavily onto the porch.

INT. DUPEA HOME - UPSTAIRS HALL - DAY

(BACH VIOLIN OVER:)

Bobby stands in the hallway, a phone to his ear, listening to Rayette and looking down the hall toward the open door to Catherine's room.

BOBBY

Yeah, well fine, you know what I suggest, Ray...

(listening)

Because I don't know how long. Things are not going that well here...

He listens again, his eyes on Catherine, moving around in her room.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Yeah, well I'm not having any fun, either, so why don't you...

(pause)

No, you can't, it's just not convenient, and I have to get off...

(listening impatiently)

Ray, I really have to go, I have to get off now...

(longer pause)

Another couple of days, maybe. I'll call you and let you --

(pause)

All right, if you're gone, you're gone. Now I have to get off, okay?

(pause)

Bye, Ray...

He hangs up and, as he starts down the hall to Catherine's room, the VIOLIN STOPS and Carl steps out into the hall ahead of him. He carries his fiddle and detains Bobby, with:

CARL

Only 10 minutes of playing and it's
already killing my neck...

Bobby looks past him to Catherine as she glances
out at them and then closes the door to her room.

EXT. DUPEA GROUNDS - DAY

Bobby and Carl, playing a game of table tennis.
Tita stands leaning against a tree, watching them.
In the b.g., Spicer can be seen, meticulously
oiling and cleaning the wheelchair.

As they volley the ball back and forth:

BOBBY

You sure you should be playing,
Carl?

CARL

What do you mean? Aside from my
neck, I'm in superb shape.

Carl hits into the net, and as the ball rebounds to
him, he tosses it to Bobby.

BOBBY

(serving)

I don't know, there's something
wrong with the way you move.

Carl hits the net again.

CARL

I'm not aware of it. Like what?

BOBBY

Your serve. Two -- Eighteen.

Carl serves and as they volley:

BOBBY (CONT'D)

I'd hate to see you walk across a
concert stage like that.

Carl tries a smash and mis-hits the ball...

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Two -- Nineteen.

... and as he retrieves it:

CARL

(irritated with Bobby)

I've walked across a stage a number of times, without exciting any particular response...

BOBBY

That's what I mean...

Carl comes back to the table.

CARL

Any particular humor, I meant.

He angrily serves the ball.

BOBBY

(returning)

I think you should get someone to coach you how to walk. I think it's a substantial problem.

He hits a smash and it sails past Carl into some shrubbery several yards away.

CARL

Dammit!

As he moves after the ball, Bobby gestures at him.

BOBBY

Look at that.

TITA

Why are you being so mean?

BOBBY

I'm not. He does walk funny. Don't you see that?

She looks at Carl, bent over and searching through the shrubs.

TITA

I don't think I'd notice. I'm so used to Carl.

BOBBY

(wanting to go on about

it)
Yeah, well, he's...

She interrupts him, looking toward Spicer.

TITA
Bobby? Do you think Spicer is
attractive?

He looks over at Spicer, polishing the frame of the
wheelchair.

BOBBY
I think he's got a terrific
personality.

TITA
You know, he was formerly a sailor.

Bobby gestures his paddle at Carl, on his way back
with the ball.

BOBBY
Look, can't you see that, what I'm
talking about?

TITA
Sailors are sadistic, I feel.

Carl comes up to the table, asserting:

CARL
See? There's nothing wrong with the
way I walk. Now where are we?

BOBBY
At game, Carl.

Carl serves and they volley briefly. Then Bobby
angles the ball sharply and puts it away.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
That's three games to none, Carl.

CARL
All right, let's have a rematch.

BOBBY
I thought you had to go to the
mainland today. Aren't you going to
miss the ferry?

Carl takes a quick glance at his watch, then drops his paddle onto the table.

CARL

Too bad. Just when I was hitting my stride.

He starts away, then turns back.

CARL (CONT'D)

Say goodbye to Catherine for me, will you?

As he moves off in the direction of the cars, Tita comes up beside Bobby.

TITA

Can I play now?

Carl calls over to them from his car:

CARL

Tell her I'll be back sometime tomorrow!

Bobby turns to Tita.

BOBBY

Where is she, anyway?

TITA

(ignoring the question)
My turn.

He hands her the paddle...

BOBBY

Why don't you and Spicer play?

... and moves off toward the house.

INT. DUPEA HOME - UPSTAIRS HALL - DAY

Bobby knocks on Catherine's door and, hearing no response, opens it and steps inside.

INT. CATHERINE'S ROOM - DAY

He wanders about, discreetly touching nothing, but taking in some essence of Catherine from her

belongings and from the scent of her that lingers in the room.

His journey brings him into proximity with the windows and he pauses to look out at:

TITA AND SPICER BELOW

playing table tennis.

He starts to move from the windows, when he sees:

CATHERINE'S CAR

pulling into view and parking near the garage. She gets out, and, carrying a shopping bag and a wrapped bouquet of flowers, pauses on her way to the house to have some exchange with Tita.

INT. DUPEA HOME - STAIRCASE - DAY

ON BOBBY

quickly descending the staircase, and FOLLOWING with him as he moves to the music room and goes inside, leaving the door open.

INT. MUSIC ROOM - DAY

He crosses to one of the grands, seats himself and rubs his hands together to warm them. Then, scanning his mental repertoire, he places his hands on the keyboard and begins to play a Chopin etude.

Presently, Catherine appears in the doorway. She stands listening for a moment, then places the shopping bag and flowers on a settee near the doorway and crosses to a chair near the pianos and sits down.

Bobby glances at her, then returns his eyes to the keyboard.

ON CATHERINE

her features intensely concentrated, as she listens to his playing.

ON BOBBY

apparently deep into the music. On the wall behind

him are the series of photographs seen in the opening and the present ANGLE FAVORS an 8-year-old Bobby in his dress suit, playing a recital.

THE CAMERA MOVES down to his hands...

... then to Catherine, profoundly moved.

ANGLE INCLUDING BOTH

as Bobby plays the concluding chords of the etude. He lets his hands linger on the keys until the last overtones fade, then he removes them to his lap.

After a brief silence:

CATHERINE

That was beautiful, Robert. I'm surprised...

BOBBY

Thank you.

CATHERINE

I was really very moved by the way you...

Unable to keep up the "serious" musician pose, a brief, derisive laugh issues from him.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

Is that funny?

BOBBY

It wasn't supposed to be, it just struck me that way.

CATHERINE

Why?

BOBBY

Nothing. It's just that... I picked the easiest piece I could remember. I think I first played it when I was 8 years old and I played it better then.

CATHERINE

It doesn't matter. It was the feeling I was affected by.

BOBBY

I didn't have any.

CATHERINE

You had no inner feeling?

BOBBY

None.

CATHERINE

Then I must have been supplying it.

She gets up and crosses toward the settee.

BOBBY

Wait...

CATHERINE

Well, at least you're accomplished
at something...

BOBBY

What?

CATHERINE

At being a fake.

And as she picks up the flowers and the shopping
bag:

BOBBY

Catherine...

CATHERINE

No, you're very good at it. I'm
really impressed.

She goes out the door.

Bobby looks down at the keyboard. He closes the
cover and softly utters:

BOBBY

Shit.

INT. CATHERINE'S BEDROOM - DAY

She stands in front of a dresser mirror, pinning up
her hair, preparatory to taking a bath. Her
attention is drawn to...

... Bobby entering, and as he crosses to her, she quickly turns back to the mirror.

BOBBY

You think I'm a fake.

CATHERINE

I think it's what you think.

BOBBY

No, it isn't what I think.

CATHERINE

Look... You made a very calculated move, and then made me feel embarrassed for responding to you. That wasn't necessary.

She moves away from him and he follows her.

BOBBY

Yes, it was. You've made it clear that if I can cut a little piano, I might get a little response.

CATHERINE

(stops and turns to him)

I don't think that's accurate...

BOBBY

Up to now, what I've been getting from you are meaningful looks over the dinner table and a lot of vague suggestions about the day after tomorrow...

CATHERINE

I'm not conscious of having given you any meaningful looks. And as for the day after tomorrow, this is the day after tomorrow, and I am, unfortunately, seeing you... Now if you'll excuse me, I'd like to take a bath.

She moves back to the dresser and as she begins searching through an array of bath oils on top of it, Bobby steps in beside her.

BOBBY

It's convenient to fake looking for

something right now, isn't it?

CATHERINE

I'm not faking anything. I'm looking for some bath oil...

BOBBY

Some bath oil?

He lifts up one of the bottles.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

What about this one?

(picking up another)

Or this one?

(and another)

How about some jasmine?

(and another)

What about some musk?

CATHERINE

What are you doing!

BOBBY

(knocking the bottles over)

What are you doing, screwing around with this crap?!

A little intimidated by his aggressivity:

CATHERINE

I don't find your language that charming.

BOBBY

It's direct, anyway, which seems to be difficult for you.

CATHERINE

I'd like you to leave now. Is that direct enough?

He makes no move to go.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

You're not a serious person, by your own admission. And that may be interesting, but it doesn't interest me...

Needing the safety of distance, she moves over to the windows next to the bed. Again, he follows after her.

BOBBY

Serious, that's what's important to you?

CATHERINE

Yes, that's what's important to me...

He takes her by the shoulders...

BOBBY

Okay, let's be serious...

... and forces her onto the bed.

CATHERINE

No, don't do that...

BOBBY

Shut up...

He hesitates for a moment, full of things he wants to say and cannot. Catherine looks up at him, uttering a quiet challenge:

CATHERINE

No inner feeling.

BOBBY

That's right.

CATHERINE

I don't believe you.

He leans down to her, begins kissing her. Her arms encircle him and laying back on the bed, she pulls his body onto hers, fervently returning his kisses. And as he responds with an ardor absent of fakery and full of a lifetime of derelict feelings, a FADE OVER BEGINS, to:

INT. CATHERINE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Catherine and Bobby lie side by side. He watches her as she addresses the ceiling:

CATHERINE

I married him when I was 17. He was a cellist, and I thought he was the most brilliant man I'd ever met... And I'm sure he was, because at that age, I hadn't met that many... But he was insidious, you know. He had me convinced that I was a mediocrity, musically, as a woman, as an intellect. But in this completely imperceptible, pleasant way, so that you weren't even sure he was doing it. Anyway, I just woke up one morning and I said, you know something Joseph, you're full of beans, and I left him...

BOBBY

That's what you said?

CATHERINE

Something witty and devastating like that.

She moves onto her side, looking over at him.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

As a matter of fact, he's the one who introduced me to Carl...

(a pause, then:)

How are you?

BOBBY

I'm fine.

CATHERINE

Carl restored my confidence. He really did. He's much more substantial than you give him credit for.

BOBBY

Is he?

CATHERINE

Yes.

She reaches over, tentatively caressing his face, then:

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

Do you think you could discreetly

move across the hall now?

BOBBY

Yeah, I think I could.

He kisses her, gets up and crosses to the door, and as he opens it:

CATHERINE

Robert?

BOBBY

What?

CATHERINE

I could spend some time with you tomorrow morning, before Carl comes back, I mean, if you'd like to.

BOBBY

Of course I'd like to.

EXT. LA ROCHE WOODS - DAY

(CHOPIN OVER:)

Bobby and Catherine walk over a path through a thickly wooded area that presently brings them in sight of the Dupea house. He stops and, taking hold of her, leans back against a tree, kissing her. When they break off and resume walking, she takes one of his hands in both of hers and, after looking at the scars and callouses accumulated by his years of manual labor, she lays the hand against her cheek.

The ANGLE ALTERS from them, to:

EXT. DUPEA HOUSE - DAY

A taxicab pulls up in front of the house. Rayette gets out with her suitcase and, after paying the driver, moves up the steps to the front door and reaches out to ring the bell.

INT. DUPEA DINING ROOM TABLE - NIGHT

ON RAYETTE

looking down the table to Nicholas.

RAYETTE

You certainly do have a beautiful piece a real estate out here, Mr. Dupea.

ON NICHOLAS AND SPICER

the former with his chin resting on his chest.

RAYETTE

(turning to Bobby)

Can he hear me?

Bobby doesn't respond.

TITA

(politely)

He's not hard of hearing.

RAYETTE

Well, that's a blessing, at least.

She takes a bite of food, and as she chews:

RAYETTE (CONT'D)

This certainly is an improvement on the motel an' the coffee shop.

(to Bobby)

How could you have left such a beautiful place, Bobby?

BOBBY

I don't know.

ON CARL

fascinated with Rayette, while beside him, Catherine keeps her eyes on her plate as she eats.

CARL

You've been staying in a motel all this time?

RAYETTE

For two whole weeks, an' there wasn't hardly nobody there to talk to but me.

The manager of the place told me it was the off season, an' it must a ben, because other'n me, there was just this 25-year-old kid, DeLyon,

that didn't appear to be all there,
an' this old married pair next to
me that was always hollerin' for
quiet. Can you imagine? All you
could a heard there was a pin, an'
them, hollerin' away...

CARL

I don't understand why you had to
stay in a motel. There's more than
enough room here.

RAYETTE

Well, I was goin' to, but Bobby
said he hadda kind of feel things
up here first, which I can
understand, but then it went an'
took so long, I ran flat outa
money...

(to Bobby)

I didn't have no number to call,
you know.

(to Carl)

So I hadda clear outa there an'
come on up here, in the hopes that
I wouldn't be intrudin' myself...

CARL

Oh, no. You're more than welcome.

RAYETTE

Well, thank you, that's a very nice
thing for you to say.

CARL

Not at all.

She goes on eating and there is a brief silence
before she resumes, looking over at Catherine:

RAYETTE

That certainly is a beautiful head
a hair you have.

CATHERINE

Thank you.

RAYETTE

Is it natural?

BOBBY

Rayette.

RAYETTE

What?

BOBBY

Just finish eating.

RAYETTE

Oh, am I holdin' up dessert?

Carl laughs.

CARL

No, you're not. Go ahead and take your time.

RAYETTE

I do eat slow as a bird, whereas Bobby can put it away like a speed swing...

(to Tita)

Is there any ketchup around?

BOBBY

Oh, for chrissakes...

CARL

Robert, let's not be rude, okay?

RAYETTE

It's all right. He don't mean anything by that.

BOBBY

I don't, huh?

He throws his napkin on the table, gets up and leaves the room. There is an awkward silence, followed by Rayette valiantly covering her own feelings:

RAYETTE

I guess Bobby's just about the moodiest man I ever ben with...

INT. FISHERMAN'S BAR - MAINLAND - NIGHT

(TAMMY WYNETTE'S "DON'T TOUCH ME" OVER:)

Bobby finishes the last of several drinks. He ships

a half pint into his jacket pocket, lays some bills on the bar and moves toward the door.

EXT. FISHERMAN'S BAR - MAINLAND - NIGHT

(WYNETTE OVER:)

Thoroughly anesthetized, he wanders aimlessly through the harbor-front streets. As he disappears into the dark, the MUSIC FADES.

EXT. WHARF - MAINLAND - DAWN

ON BOBBY

lying huddled on the boardwalk next to the boat slips. The crying of the gulls and the sound of outgoing fishing launches awaken him. Disoriented, he gets to his feet and, hugging himself against the cold, moves unsteadily down the dock.

EXT. FERRY - MORNING

Bobby's car pulls off the ferry and approaches a line of cars waiting to board. He sees Catherine at the wheel of the first car, and pulling abreast of her, stops and rolls down his window.

BOBBY

Where are you going?

CATHERINE

I'm going to pick up some friends of Carl's. Are you all right?

BOBBY

I have to talk to you.

CATHERINE

I'll be back later...

The blocked cars behind each of them begin HONKING impatiently and CONTINUE TO under the following:

BOBBY

No, I want to talk to you now. I have to explain something about...

CATHERINE

No, you don't have to, it isn't necessary...

BOBBY
(overlapping her)
Yes, it is!

A DRIVER behind Bobby sticks his head out the window, yelling furiously at him:

DRIVER
Come on, get moving, dammit!!

BOBBY
(turning around to him)
Will you shut up for a minute!!
(to Catherine)
Pull your car out of line.

CATHERINE
No, I can't...

BOBBY
Will you let me talk to you,
please?

CATHERINE
I can't do that. I haven't been
being fair to Carl. I have to tell
you that.

BOBBY
(barely audible)
Oh. You have to tell me that.

CATHERINE
What?! I can't hear you!

He looks back at her not responding.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry everything's been so
confusing, but I have to go,
Robert...

BOBBY
Catherine...

CATHERINE
Please, I'll see you later this
evening.

She pulls ahead and moves onto the ferry.

INT. DUPEA LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

FAVORING SAMIA GLAVIA

a friend of Carl's. (Somewhere under the following, the ANGLE ALTERS to include TWO OTHER FRIENDS, as well as Carl, Catherine, Bobby and Rayette, seated around the living room, variously captive to her monologue.)

SAMIA

But the point is, man is born into the world with a pre-existent adversary, both real and imaginary, so you'd have to say that aggression was one of his primary, psychic inheritances, which...

JOHN FINCHER, a professorial type, attempts to interject:

FINCHER

If I may beg to differ...

SAMIA

Beg all you like, John, but the fact remains that man takes enormous delight in aggressive acts, as well as the portrayal of aggressive acts, and to be triumphant over another no matter how, seems fundamental to his having a sense of well being, as well as...

FINCHER

No, I don't quarrel with your inference, but you draw too long a bow in your conclusions, which seem unnecessarily harsh and...

SAMIA

Well, I don't make poetry. As an analyst, I...

Rayette interrupts, calling across the room to Carl:

RAYETTE

Is there a TV in the house?

Carl starts to answer and is pre-empted by Samia:

SAMIA

John believes in the basic goodness of man, and that's fine, but gaze into the pit like I have and that view seems a little soporific. And not unlike television, it hardly represents the real world...

RAYETTE

There's some good things on it, though.

SAMIA

Pardon me?

RAYETTE

The TV. There's some good things on it, sometimes.

SAMIA

I strongly doubt it, but I wasn't really discussing media...

FINCHER

If you really hold such bleak views, how can you, in good conscience, carry on a practice?

SAMIA

Oh, there's always hope, I think, for a few individuals, if they're courageous enough to shed their illusions and their...

CATHERINE

(cutting her off)

And what about love?

SAMIA

What about it? Wouldn't you agree that a great deal of mischief has been done in the name of love?

CATHERINE

No, I wouldn't.

SAMIA

Well, you're a romantic, Catherine,

as are most musicians, and what's more, about to be married...

ON BOBBY

and his reaction as Samia goes on:

SAMIA

... which should exclude you from any objective discussion. But keep in mind, even the arts aren't free of aggressive content, nor the institution of marriage.

CATHERINE

I think these cold, "objective" discussions are aggressive, Samia...

She gets up and starts to move away.

SAMIA

But I'd like to say, so that I don't dampen the spirit of your adventure...

CATHERINE

(cutting her off)

You haven't dampened my spirit, Samia... Excuse me.

SAMIA

Well, I should hope not...

She leaves the room, with Bobby's eyes following her, and as Carl moves over to sit beside Rayette, Samia resumes to Fincher while the other friend moves in beside Bobby and tries to engage him in conversation.

SAMIA (CONT'D)

Because obviously there are loftier classes of people that do establish a kind of relating, that's relatively free of... (Etc.)

ON CARL AND RAYETTE

as she indicates Tita's dog, lying near the fireplace.

RAYETTE

What kind of doggy is that?

CARL

It's a Borzoi.

RAYETTE

Oh, uh huh. I had a little kittycat once, that Bobby give me...

She calls across to Bobby, interrupting Samia.

RAYETTE (CONT'D)

Remember, Bobby?! The little pussycat you gave me?!

Bobby, now feeling trapped by the other friend, looks across to her as she returns her attention to Carl.

RAYETTE (CONT'D)

She had four little white paws, an' oh, was I crazy over her. We hadda go an' leave her one time at some friends, an' she went out an' got smashed flatter'n a tortilla right outside their mobile home.

Samia gestures toward Rayette as if she were an example to prove her point.

SAMIA

There. You see what I mean?

Bobby looks over at Samia.

SAMIA (CONT'D)

The choice of words, "squashed flat," juxtaposed against the image of a fluffy kitten...

RAYETTE

Well, she was.

SAMIA

Perhaps...

She addresses Fincher gesturing toward Rayette again.

SAMIA (CONT'D)

But you see how close that is to what I'm trying to...

Bobby stands up, cutting her off:

BOBBY

Don't sit there pointing at her.

SAMIA

I beg your pardon.

BOBBY

(advancing on her)

I said, don't point at her like that! What gives you the right to sit there and tell anybody about class and who the hell's got it, and what she typifies! You shouldn't even be in the same room with her, you creep!

SAMIA

Carl, this is really too much...

BOBBY

(to Samia)

You're totally full of shit!

CARL

Robert, I think you better just...

BOBBY

(cutting him off)

You're all full of shit!

He turns away and exits the room.

INT. DUPEA HOME - NIGHT

FOLLOWING WITH BOBBY

running up the stairs and down the hall to Catherine's room. He goes inside and, not finding her, comes quickly back into the hall. As he moves down it, opening other doors, he begins calling her name.

He comes back down the stairs and runs into Rayette at the bottom landing.

RAYETTE

Bobby...

BOBBY

(moving past her)

I can't talk to you right now,
leave me alone...

He moves to the music room, to the den, then down the main hall to the kitchen, which gives off to two other doors. He opens one of them, to see:

INT. SPICER'S ROOM - NIGHT

Tita and Spicer. Though both are clothed, they are caught in some stage of intimacy on top of Spicer's bed. Tita sits up immediately, mortally embarrassed, as Bobby steps into the room.

BOBBY

Tita, what the hell are you doing?!

Spicer stands up.

SPICER

Hey, this is my room.

BOBBY

(moving over to the bed)

What's going on here!?

TITA

It's none of your business!

BOBBY

Where's Catherine?!

TITA

I don't know where she is!

Spicer moves to Bobby, taking hold of his arm.

SPICER

Don't you believe in knocking, pal?

Bobby roughly pushes him away and advances on Tita.

BOBBY

I'm talking to you, Tita!

TITA

(close to tears)

Can't I have anything to myself,
dammit?!

SPICER

(grabbing hold of him
again)

Come on now, out!

BOBBY

(struggling with him)

Keep your fucking hands off my
sister, nurse!

Spicer goes into sudden rage, pushing Bobby
violently toward the door and yelling:

SPICER

Did you hear me! Move out!!

Bobby leaps at him and as their struggle carries
them into the kitchen, Tita begins yelling:

TITA

Stop it! Bobby, will just you stop!
I mean it!

Spicer gets Bobby into a painful headlock and is
being bulled around the kitchen by him.

SPICER

Hold it, just hold it!!

They crash into the kitchen table, knocking chairs
over.

TITA

Carl! Somebody get Carl!

Bobby rams Spicer into the refrigerator.

SPICER

Take it easy, dammit!

He hurls him against the kitchen wall, still
holding him in a headlock as Tita enters the
kitchen.

TITA

Stop it! Right now! Just stop it!!
Carl!!

And as she runs from the room, Spicer begins violently jerking his forearm up against Bobby's trachea, punctuating each jerk with the repeated command:

SPICER

Give up! Give up! Give up! Give up!
Give up! Give up!

He feels Bobby's body slacken. He releases him and Bobby drops to the floor as...

... Carl, Catherine and Tita run into the kitchen, looking to:

Bobby, gasping for air, tries to get up from the floor, and unable to, slumps back against the kitchen wall.

TITA

Oh God, Bobby, look what you've done...

He looks past her, to Catherine.

BOBBY

I just wanted to talk to you for a minute.

EXT. BAYFRONT - DAY

Catherine and Bobby sit on a low stone wall bordering the Dupea property. Each is staring out at the ocean, and after a moment:

CATHERINE

No. It's useless, Robert. It wouldn't work, not ever...

BOBBY

Just give me a chance, will you?

CATHERINE

I'm trying to be delicate with you, but you're not understanding me.

It's not just because of Carl, or my music, but because of you...

(she looks at him)

I mean, what would it come to? If a person has no love for himself, no respect, no love for his work, his

family, his friends, something...
How can he ask for love in return?
I mean, why should he ask for it?

Profoundly wounded, he looks away from her.

BOBBY

And living out here, in this rest
home asylum, that's what you want?

CATHERINE

Yes.

BOBBY

(looking back to her)
That'll make you happy.

CATHERINE

I hope it will, yes.
(she pauses, then:)
I'm sorry.

Needing to distance herself from witnessing his
pain, she gets up and moves OUT OF FRAME.

His eyes move from her to look out over the bay
and, after a brief silence, he softly utters:

BOBBY

Okay.

EXT. COUNTRY - DAY

Bobby pushes Nicholas's wheelchair along a path
between fields of tall grasses and wildflowers. He
stops and moves around to the front of the chair.

BOBBY

Are you cold?

He leans over to adjust the blanket covering
Nicholas's legs and, hunkering down in front of
him, glances around at the fields, searching for
articulation:

BOBBY (CONT'D)

I don't know if you'd be
particularly interested in hearing
anything about me. My life, I
mean... Most of it doesn't add up
to much... that I could relate as a

way of life that you'd approve
of...

He pauses briefly, then:

BOBBY (CONT'D)

I'd like to be able to tell you
why, but I don't really... I mean,
I move around a lot because things
tend to get bad when I stay. And
I'm looking... for auspicious
beginnings, I guess...

He breaks off again, resuming with evident
difficulty.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

I'm trying to, you know, imagine
your half of this conversation...
My feeling is, that if you could
talk, we probably wouldn't be
talking. That's pretty much how it
got to be before. I left...

(another pause)

Are you all right?

He searches his father's face, entreating him for
some kind of answer, some sign of response, and
seeing none...

BOBBY (CONT'D)

I don't know what to say...

... he breaks down, barely able to utter the
following:

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Tita suggested that we try to... I
don't know. I think that she...
seems to feel we've got... some
understanding to reach... She
totally denies the fact that we
were never that comfortable with
each other to begin with...

(pauses, trying to gain
control)

The best I can do, is apologize.

He looks silently at his father for a moment...

BOBBY (CONT'D)

We both know I was never really that good at it, anyway...

... then, bowing his head:

BOBBY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry it didn't work out.

EXT. DUPEA HOUSE - DAY

Bobby comes out the front door. He carries his suitcase and, as he descends the steps and moves across the drive...

... Tita, wearing gloves and holding a pair of gardening clippers, comes around the side of the house and calls out to him:

TITA

Bobby!

He sets the suitcase down as she comes toward him.

TITA (CONT'D)

You're leaving?

BOBBY

Yeah. I said a week, and I've overstayed myself...

TITA

You were going without saying goodbye?

BOBBY

I didn't want to say goodbye to anyone.

TITA

But what about me?

BOBBY

(smiling at her)

I'll say goodbye to you, Tita.

She puts her arms around him and as she embraces him:

TITA

Just once in a while, call and tell me where you are, please...

RAYETTE'S VOICE
Watch the birdie!

They turn to see:

Rayette, standing near the open trunk of Bobby's car, taking a Polaroid shot of them.

Bobby returns his attention to Tita, kissing her.

BOBBY
Bye, now.

TITA
(tearing up)
Bye, Robert.

He picks up his suitcase and moves to the trunk, where Rayette is fussing with her camera. He puts the suitcase inside, closes the trunk and takes hold of her arm.

BOBBY
Come on.

RAYETTE
(resisting him)
Wait a sec. I want Tita to take a picture of you an' me in front of the place...

BOBBY
No, let's go...

She pulls free of him and, as she moves back toward Tita, Bobby can be seen getting into the driver's seat.

RAYETTE
I never got the chance to thank you all for your hospitality. You tell Carl for me, if any of you folks wanta come on down to our place anytime, you'd be more'n welcome...

TITA
Thank you, that's very nice.

RAYETTE
Bye bye, now.

She moves back to the car and gets in.

ON TITA

watching as Bobby's car pulls out of the drive and disappears onto the private road.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

As Bobby's car moves over a highway through the northern forests, RAYETTE'S VOICE is heard SINGING:

RAYETTE

"Your kiss is like a drink when I'm
thirsty/An' I'm thirsty for you
with all my heart..."

INT. BOBBY'S CAR - HIGHWAY - DAY

Rayette is seated close to Bobby, looking at him as she sings.

RAYETTE

"But don't love me/Then act as
though we've never kissed/Oh, don't
touch me..."

She leans closer and kisses him, then bringing her lips close to his ear:

RAYETTE (CONT'D)

"Don't touch me..."

She kisses him again.

RAYETTE (CONT'D)

"Don't touch me..."

And again.

RAYETTE (CONT'D)

"Don't touch me..."

Her kisses become more fervent and insistent.

RAYETTE (CONT'D)

"Oh, don't touch..."

He suddenly pushes her away.

BOBBY

Cut it out!

Grievously hurt by his gesture and expressive of an anger she's heretofore been afraid to reveal:

RAYETTE

Son of a bitch, Bobby! You quit pushin' me away like that! I've had enough a that to last me a lifetime!

She makes a fist of her hand as though she were about to hit him, then changes her mind.

RAYETTE (CONT'D)

Whyn't you just try an' be good to me for a change!?

There is no response. She turns away from him, looking out through the windshield for a moment, then:

RAYETTE (CONT'D)

There id'n anyone gonna look after you an' love you better'n I do, you know that.

She looks over at him.

RAYETTE (CONT'D)

Baby? Did you hear me?

There is no response.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

ON BOBBY'S CAR

as it turns off the highway and pulls up into a gas station next to roadside cafe.

INT. BOBBY'S CAR - DAY

ON RAYETTE

searching through her purse.

RAYETTE

I'm gonna go in that cafe an' get some coffee. You want anything?

BOBBY

No.

RAYETTE

You got any change?

He searches into his jacket, takes out his wallet and hands it to her.

RAYETTE (CONT'D)

Don't you just have 50 cents or somethin'?

He shakes his head.

RAYETTE (CONT'D)

Okay, be right back...

She reaches to the door and opens it.

EXT. BOBBY'S CAR - DAY

Bobby gets out of the car as the station attendant approaches.

Rayette turns back to him as she nears the front of the cafe.

RAYETTE

Sure you don't want anything?

BOBBY

(to attendant)

Fill it up.

The attendant moves to the pumps, and as Bobby crosses toward the men's room and disappears inside, a Peterbilt semi can be seen pulling into the station.

INT. GAS STATION - MEN'S ROOM - DAY

Bobby removes his jacket and lays it on top of the waste container. He moves to the wash basin and stands a moment, gazing absently down at it, his mind searching for that inward oblivion in which nothing much is demanded, nothing much felt.

Then, leaning over and placing his hands on the rim of the basin...

... he lifts his gaze to the mirror and, after minutely perusing the features of his face, looks into his own eyes as he had into his fathers, silently beseeching them for guidance.

EXT. MEN'S ROOM - GAS STATION - DAY

(SOUND OF SEMI'S MOTOR OVER:)

REMOTE ANGLE as Bobby comes out of the men's room. He has left his jacket inside and stands for a moment, looking at the...

... DRIVER, bending down to check the undercarriage of the semi. As he stands up and circuits the front of the truck, heading for the cab:

BOBBY

(faintly audible)

Hey, wait a minute.

He moves over to him and after a brief exchange, the driver nods his head and continues on to the cab, Bobby moves to the passenger door and climbs up into the pass seat.

INT. SEMI CAB - GAS STATION - DAY

The driver glances over at Bobby:

DRIVER

Haven't you got a jacket or anything with you?

BOBBY

No, I don't, I uh... it got burned up. Everything in the car got the shit burned out of it. All I got left is what I have on...

DRIVER

I've got an extra jacket behind the seat, if you want to put it on.

BOBBY

No, it's okay.

DRIVER

Suit yourself. But I'll tell you, where we're headed is gonna get

colder'n hell.

BOBBY

It's all right. I'm fine.

The driver puts the truck into gear and releases the brake.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

I'm all right.

And as the truck begins to move forward:

BOBBY (CONT'D)

I'm fine.

EXT. SEMI - GAS STATION - DAY

REMOTE ANGLE:

The semi pulls out of the station onto the highway, giving view to Bobby's car. The attendant is cleaning the windshield and Rayette can be seen opening the passenger door. As she gets out and surveys the area for some sign of Bobby, the semi MOVES INTO VIEW, going north on the highway.

Rayette looks over the hood of the car, addressing the attendant. He gestures toward the men's room and as she moves across the station and disappears OFF THE SCREEN...

... the semi recedes in the distance, leaving a black trail of smoke from its exhaust stack, dissipating in the air.

THE END