

109908

MAGGIE LYNN

an original screenplay
by
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Sometimes it's like you're a big pie settin' on the table, and everybody runs up and gets their piece of you. When it's over. . . the plate's empty.

- Loretta Lynn

A simple COUNTRY TUNE can be heard on an ACOUSTIC GUITAR.

We follow the bare feet of LITTLE MAGGIE LYNN (6), dressed in CARE BEAR PAJAMAS. She follows the music toward the barn and carefully peeks inside.

A lantern burns. A warm glow. It's a holy place.

Her father sits in silhouette, leaning the back of his chair against his OLD FORD TRUCK, playing his guitar and singing. It's an old Willie Nelson song, Hands on the Wheel.

This is B.DADDY (late 30's). He has a shaggy beard and a cowboy hat. A tough exterior over a warm heart.

He senses a presence and stops playing.

B.DADDY

You know the words, don't you?

He smiles at her. She smiles back and stands before him.

He strums a chord. Little Maggie sings along. Her voice is surprisingly strong, crackling with a southern twang.

Their voices fit perfectly together. Daddy's little girl.

VROOOOM! A thunderous roar from a car engine sounds.

Maggie Lynn McDodd, now a (30) year old woman, jerks awake from her peaceful dream. She turns to her husband's side of the bed.

Empty.

VROOOOM! He's out working in THE SHOP again.

She crosses into SHELBY'S room and lifts her daughter (11 months) out of her crib.

MAGGIE

Mornin', Shelby. You hearin' all that racket?

(knocks on a door)

Jasper? Son? It's time to get up.

A boy runs by. It's JASPER (11), Maggie's son. His thick East Tennessee accent is sweet and earnest.

JASPER

I'm up, Momma. I'm just out in the shop helping Daddy.

MAGGIE

No, sir. Jasp! Since you're up, go'on get ready for school.

JASPER

But I gotta give Daddy his thermos.

Maggie marches after him toward THE SHOP bouncing Shelby on her hip.

3 EXT. MAGGIE AND WYATT'S HOME - THE SHOP - EARLY MORNING 3

The family lives paycheck to paycheck, but they've managed to keep their small home in the foothills of Jellico, Tennessee.

She steps into the THE SHOP, covering Shelby's ears.

KEOUGH (30's) works under the hood of the silver LATE MODEL DIRT RACER (Number 33). He's an odd looking character with a grease-caked ball cap and a cheek full of chaw.

KEOUGH

(shouting over the engine)

Wyatt! You feeling that shake coming off the throttle?

WYATT MCDODD (32) pulls himself out of the driver's side window. He's a good looking young man with a determined gaze.

WYATT

We got problems.

KEOUGH

Nu-uh. We just got a girl who likes to shake and jiggle. If that's our only hiccup... I'm good.

MAGGIE

This couldn't wait till sun-up?

WYATT

Remember I told you about that man from Chapman Oil, gonna come up next weekend and watch me race? Well, that ain't gonna happen cuz he's comin' up tonight.

(MORE)

Me and Keough WYATT work all hours
just trying to get this piece a
shit workin' right...

KEOGH

Hey, now. Be nice to my girl!

JASPER

Daddy, you want me to back up the
truck?

MAGGIE

No, sir! You go inside and
get ready for...

WYATT

(tosses him the keys)
Just go easy on the clutch.
(Sees Maggie's anger)
I always let him back up the
truck. He don't hurt nothin'.

4 EXT. MAGGIE AND WYATT'S HOME - THE SHOP - LATER 4

Barely able to look over the dash, Jasper backs the FLATBED
TOW up to the DIRT RACER.

WYATT

You're good, son. A little more...

The truck lunges back and stops just short of the racer.
Keough jumps but Wyatt just grins. A good dad.

WYATT

There you go, buddy. Perfect.

Wyatt puts on his BOLTON BEANS work shirt and cap.

WYATT

You got the RV handled for tonight?

MAGGIE

(nods)

Yeah. The station wagon's been
hissing at me again. Thought you
were gonna get on that.

WYATT

Keep her under 40, I'll get to it
tomorrow...

Maggie follows as Wyatt and Keough march toward the truck.

MAGGIE

JASPER

You said that yesterday...

See you after school, daddy!

WYATT
 Will do, partner.
 (kisses his wife)
 Smile, Maggie. It's race day.

MAGGIE
 Every day is race day.

CUT TO:

5 EXT. JELLICO ELEMENTARY - NIGHT

5

Maggie and Jasper are in the front seat, Shelby is strapped in her car seat in the back. The CROSSING GUARD waves to Maggie as she pulls to a stop.

MAGGIE
 You're getting a ride to ball
 practice with Billy's mom. I'll
 pick you up at four sharp.
 (Jasper's off)
 Tell your coach I gotta get ya
 early cuz of race day. LOVE YOU!

The car stalls and begins to hiss. Maggie cranks it and grits her teeth.

MAGGIE
 Come on... come on... shit.

The car cranks back to life. A sigh of relief.

MAGGIE
 (looks back at Shelby)
 Momma said a bad word, huh, Shelby?

6 INT. CHURCH NURSING HOME - MORNING

6

Maggie pushes the door open with her shoulder, carrying Shelby.

She is greeted by her mother, WANDA (60), a nurse at the CHURCH NURSING HOME. She is an older version of Maggie. Still strong, still attractive.

WANDA
 Mabel missed her walk this morning.
 Where you been?

MAGGIE

Sorry, Momma. My car keeps stallin'
on me...

WANDA

Uncle Faye's been flirtin' with her
between songs. She'll be fine.

Wanda points into the dining room at UNCLE FAYE (70) playing his banjo for all the old women. He's charming and sweet with a long white beard.

WANDA

(taking Shelby)

Your brother's gonna need some more
change for the bar tonight.
Singles. No fives or tens. Just a
shit-load of ones.

Maggie puts on her nursing home uniform - same as Wanda's.

MAGGIE

I'm on the clock here till noon.
After that I was gonna head over
and get groceries for tonight.

(looks at her watch)

If you can keep Shelby here with
you, I can get over to the bank
faster. I swear, it's like my day
just started and I'm already
runnin' out of it.

Wanda can see her daughter is stressed and upset.

WANDA

(kissing on Shelby)

You alright?

(Maggie shrugs)

Maggie, look at me.

MAGGIE

I don't know what's got between me
and Wyatt. I mean... am I gonna
have to paint a racing number on my
ass to get my husband to touch me
again?

CUT TO:

7 EXT. B. DADDY'S BAR - DAY

7

Maggie parks her feverish station wagon. She marches up to the front step of the family bar: B. DADDY'S.

Something stops her. A man is asleep in the front seat of an OLD CAR. It's her older brother KELL MORTON (37).

MAGGIE

Kell?

Kell slowly opens his eyes. It's been a while since he's had a shave, but he's not without sex appeal.

MAGGIE

You been here since last night?

KELL

I do recall it being dark.

MAGGIE

(opens his door)

Well, it's two o'clock. That's PM.

KELL

Is your car hissing?

MAGGIE

Only at you, Kell.

8 INT. B. DADDY'S BAR - DAY

8

Behind the bar are numerous photos pinned up for customers to see.

Among the pictures is one large black and white photo, framed and hung respectfully in the center. This is B.DADDY, Maggie's father.

His cowboy hat is pulled down low over his brow. The picture makes him look kind but stern.

MAGGIE

Momma said you needed some change.

KELL

That's not true. Momma loves me just how I am.

Maggie slaps the cash on the bar next to an electric guitar with its strings in a tangle. Kell rummages through the utility closet.

KELL

Got some new strings. You need any?

MAGGIE

Haven't played in years, Kell.
Don't see why I need any strings.
(a stress filled breath)
Did you talk to Percy at the bank
about re-financing Momma's house?

KELL

Not yet.

MAGGIE

You know she doesn't have a head
for that stuff. You gotta get on
that. On my grave, I'll not have my
mother work all her life in a
nursing home just so she could die
in one.

Kell reappears and crosses to Maggie holding a gray jar.

KELL

This liquid here's got metal powder
in it. You just pour it in your
radiator, get it hot and steamy and
it melts right into the leak. It's
like when Daddy went on chemo.
Gotta get it sick to get it better.

MAGGIE

That's not funny.

Maggie takes the jar and leaves. The door slams.

KELL

Didn't mean for it to be.

CUT TO:

REDNECK ROCK BLARES. An 18 wheeler flat bed is used as a stage for the opening band. They play hard and loud.

A healthy flow of citizens make their way toward the opening gate of the DIRT RING.

A simple oval track is bathed in white overhead lights. In the INFIELD are dirt mounds where local teenagers show off their MOTORCROSS skills, jumping their dirt bikes.

Maggie marches down a row of LATE MODEL DIRT RACERS, carrying a six pack of COORS in one hand and Shelby on her hip. She ducks in and out of the mayhem, not breaking her stride.

She stops at her husband's car. Jasper is helping Wyatt change a tire. Keough grabs the 6 pack.

KEOUGH

Thanks, Mag.

MAGGIE

Head on up to the RV, Jasp, and wash up. You boys make time to eat.

WYATT

(points to the stands)
Look up top, by the spotter booth.
See that bald headed dude there
with the bow-tie?

Maggie sees ROGER MACON (40's), wearing a bow-tie.

WYATT

Roger Macon from Chapman Oil. They started gettin' into sponsorin' dirt racers since they televised the El Dora 100.

MAGGIE

Means he's important?

WYATT

Means I gotta win.

10

EXT. DIRT RING - PIT ALLEY - THE RV - NIGHT

10

Maggie lowers the awning on her RV. Shelby rolls around in her play pen. Jasper climbs up on top of the roof of the RV and scans the track with a pair of binoculars.

JASPER

(into a walkie-talkie)
Billy, I got eyes on the track.
What's your 20?

BILLY ON THE RADIO

I'm on carnival lane, gettin' some cotton candy. Want some, Jasp?

JASPER

Negative. But I'll take some
Cracker Jacks, comeback.

Maggie lights the coals on the barbecue. She's fixing supper for all her family: hotdogs and burgers.

11 EXT. THE DIRT RING - MAIN STAGE - NIGHT

11

HOLT (40's) scans the cheering crowd with his CHANNEL 2 WEATHER CAMERA. A woman's voice is heard.

SALLY PRICE

(o.c.)

Three... two... one... Rise and
Shine, Jellico! The third race of
this season is just about to kick
off with a special...

(breaks)

Holt!

Holt stops taping. SALLY PRICE (27) is glaring at him. Sexy green eyes through fronted blond bangs.

SALLY PRICE

I go "three... two... one..." you
pan off the crowd and you turn the
camera back to me.

HOLT

Hey. Why are you saying "rise and
shine" when it's dark?

Sally rolls her eyes and holds up her broadcast microphone, fixed with a BEAMING SUN PATTERN. She also has a small, matching DIAMOND PIN on her lapel.

SALLY PRICE

It's the name of our show, Holt. We
do highlights every Monday.

HOLT

Yeah, but I never understood...

SALLY PRICE

You don't have to. Just point the
damn camera at me.

12

EXT. THE DIRT RING - PIT ALLEY - NIGHT

12

Eight cars are lined up side by side into four rows. The drivers and their crews are preparing their cars.

ERNIE THE ANNOUNCER

Qualifying and pole positioning was determined earlier this evening and is as follows. On the pole, Number 19, Jared "Big Boy" Little.

BIG BOY (30) is a classic asshole. He waves with one hand and flips the bird with his other. The crowd boos.

ERNIE THE ANNOUNCER

On the outside, Number 96, PEGGY PATTON.

Cheers for PEGGY (25), a sharp-voiced country gal, with pig-tail braids and a tomboy attitude. She calls out to Wyatt.

PEGGY

Sorry you're up my ass again, Wyatt. But what can a girl do when she's faster than greased friggin' lightnin'?

BIG BOY

You're still behind me, Peg.

PEGGY

Suck my tit, Big! Turn four you'll be draftin' on my farts.

ERNIE THE ANNOUNCER

On the outside, Number 33, Wyatt "Riot" McDodd.

13

EXT. THE DIRT RING - PIT ALLEY - THE RV

13

Jasper cheers his daddy from the top of the RV. Wanda and Uncle Faye round the corner.

UNCLE FAYE

Hey, Jasper! I brought wieners!

WANDA

(laughs)

And if we don't cook 'em up, he'll eat 'em right out of the wrappin'.

JASPER

Mommy Wanda you gonna climb up here
and watch Daddy race?

WANDA

(picking up Shelby)

If it means I get a kiss.

(crosses to Maggie)

Uncle Faye said he'd watch the
kids. Why don't you come out to the
bar tonight. Give you and Wyatt
some special time together.

MAGGIE

All he's gonna do is talk racin'.
Might as well not be there.

WANDA

You know, whenever your daddy got
to ignoring me, I'd just reach over
between his legs, grip his junk
real firm, stick my tongue in his
ear, and he'd forget his own name.
Think on that.

Maggie thinks on it as Wanda eats a Dorito.

UP ON THE STAGE: the band concludes. The front man of the
band speaks to the growing crowd.

FRONT MAN

Thank you! Y'all stay for the
halftime show with Brandon Gill!

BIG CHEERS and squeals. Maggie looks up the embankment to see
a long, black and silver TOUR BUS.

BRANDON GILL'S grinning mug stretches across the side. His
ice blue eyes peek out from under his black cowboy hat.

14 EXT. THE DIRT RING - PIT ALLEY/ EXT. MAIN STAGE - NIGHT 14

The JELLICO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHOIR is wrapping up the
National Anthem on the main stage. All hats are off.

The wives and girlfriends (and in Peggy's case, a boyfriend)
stand at attention next to their drivers and their cars.
Maggie stands next to her husband, her hand over her heart.

FINALE. FIREWORKS. BIG CHEERS. Wyatt and all the other
drivers slide into their cars.

Wyatt reaches for his safety belts. But Maggie stops him. She leans in the window and gently takes the belt from his grip.

MAGGIE
(with a bright smile)
Hey... thought this was my job.

Maggie leans in the window and stretches her body across Wyatt's lap as she buckles him in. She looks him in the eyes and places her hands on his face.

MAGGIE
You ride hard, baby. And you come
home safe.

She loves this man. She kisses him with passion and is gone. Wyatt is moved and conflicted.

ERNIE THE ANNOUNCER
To say the most famous words in
racing history, give a hand to
Tennessee's own, platinum selling
artist, Brandon Gill!

Maggie watches Brandon take the stage to deafening cheers.

BRANDON GILL (35) is too sexy for words. With his black hat, and carefree attitude, he's the kind of guy men want to drink with and women want to fuck.

BRANDON
Ladies... AND GENTLEMEN! START...
YOUR... ENGINES!

VVVRRRRROOOOOOMMMMM! The two rows of cars rumble to life. All of the racers rev their engines. The crowd starts waving flags and cheering.

One of the motocross kids rolls on the track with the PACE BIKE. The two rows of RACERS follow at a measured pace.

Maggie joins Keough behind the cement barrier of TURN FOUR. He hands her a pair of goggles. She straps them on as the cars rumble by at a measured pace.

The FLAG MARSHAL above the track waves the GREEN FLAG.

ERNIE THE ANNOUNCER
And they're off! Let's go racing at
the DIRT RING!

The dirt racers tear into the track. Sliding sideways around the corners, slamming into each other.

ZZZEEEYEEERRRR. ZEYERR, ZEYERR, ZEYERR!

A thick cloud of dust grows larger, spilling into the stands. It's like an angry bee hive just fell to the ground and cracked open.

Keough and Maggie are sprayed with dirt and rocks at TURN FOUR. It's downright dangerous.

The crowd cheers! Big Boy's Number 19 pushes a ANOTHER RACER into the barriers.

ERNIE THE ANNOUNCER
Charley Sawyers, into the infield!

The car breaks through, spinning out of control over the motorcross dirt mounds. It flips over and crashes.

ERNIE THE ANNOUNCER
*OH! Number 19 takes Charley out.
 And we have our first caution.*

15 EXT. DIRT RING - PIT ALLEY

15

Maggie walks up the embankment toward the rest of the RV's. She bends over and shakes the dirt out of her hair. A cloud of dust surrounds her. Her face is powdered with dirt.

A playful scream. She looks over at BRANDON GILL'S TOUR BUS. Two women stumble out. It's Maggie's friends, MARY (27) and KIM (32). Mary is buttoning up her shirt.

MAGGIE
 Mary? What are you doin' up in his
 bus with your shirt off?

MARY
 I just had him sign my titty.

KIM
 He's hella fine up close. They say
 TV adds 10 pounds but I don't know
 where they put it. That man is lean.

MAGGIE
 Y'all goin' to B.Daddy's tonight?

MARY
 (holds up her beer)
 Have beer! Will travel!

Maggie watches them walk away.

BRANDON

Were you wantin' an autograph?

She turns to see Brandon Gill leaning against his bus holding a Corona, smiling at her.

Maggie tries to hide the fact that she's a little star-struck.

MAGGIE

I don't like graffiti on my boobies.

BRANDON

You gonna hang around for the show?

MAGGIE

I'm thinking about it.

BRANDON

Thinkin' about it? What's there to think about? You like Country music, don't you?

MAGGIE

Is that what they're callin' it?

Maggie grins playfully. Brandon stops sipping his beer.

BRANDON

(challenged)

It's what they call it on the radio, darlin'.

MAGGIE

Country stations won't even play Loretta Lynn no more. Don't talk to me about what's Country and what's not.

BRANDON

(impressed)

Well... kiss my grits.

Brandon has moved closer. He tries not to laugh at the dirt on her face.

MAGGIE

You laughin' cuz I got dirt on my face?

(wipes it off)

I'm the wife of a racer, comes with the job.

BRANDON
You part of his pit crew?

MAGGIE
Well. He put a ring on my finger. I
reckon I am.

BRANDON
(hands her his beer)
And where's he now? Your husband?

MAGGIE
(thinks, and then takes a
drink)
Goin' round and round.

16 EXT. THE DIRT RING - RACE TRACK/TURN FOUR GUARD RAIL - NIGHT
Big Boy slams into Peggy. BAM! She tags Big Boy back leaving
the inside vulnerable for Wyatt. He pushes ahead.

ERNIE THE ANNOUNCER
Wyatt Riot on the inside!

Wyatt zips ahead a considerable distance. Keough sticks out
his arms signaling Wyatt as he takes the corner.

KEOGH
Two behind you! Two behind!

Wyatt groans as he takes TURN FOUR again, Big Boy is closing
in. Slamming the back of his NUMBER 33.

17 EXT. THE DIRT RING - PIT ALLEY - NIGHT 17
Maggie takes another drink and cradles the beer to her chest.

BRANDON
You from around here?

MAGGIE
Born and raised. Farthest I ever
been is Knoxville when my daddy
took us to a Vol game. What about
you?

BRANDON
I live in Nashville.

MAGGIE

You know, my brother, Kell, he used to play the clubs down there. Kell Morton? Ever heard of him?

(Brandon shrugs)

Well... you probably just hang out with famous people. Huh?

BRANDON

(extends his hand)

I'm Brandon. Brandon Gill.

MAGGIE

(takes his hand, laughs)

I know. I read your bus. Maggie. Maggie Lynn.

BRANDON

Well, Maggie Lynn. I'm gonna play three songs at the break, then hit the road to Little Rock. But, if you want to take a ride on my bus...

She looks up into his gorgeous eyes.

MAGGIE

I got two kids. Can they come too?

(backs up with a swagger)

Time I got back, I guess.

BRANDON

Cinderella with the checkered flag.

MAGGIE

Glass slippers? Out here? I don't think so.

Maggie turns and walks toward her RV. She breaks out of her flirtatious high hearing the sound of her son approaching.

JASPER

Momma! He won. They were door to door but Daddy dug it out.

Maggie and Jasper run up to the chain link fence at the end of the stands. Everyone is on their feet cheering.

SALLY PRICE

(with attitude)

Excuse me. Could you please move?

Sally Price, camera man in tow, moves Maggie to the side as she opens the gate to the track. Maggie watches her prance up to Wyatt's car and hand him the checkered flag.

SALLY PRICE

(using her mic)

Wyatt "Riot" McDodd! Winner of the Late Model Stock Challenge, a check for 400 hundred dollars. How do you feel tonight?

WYATT

Ready to do it again.

Wyatt spins his tires and takes off. He waves the flag out the window as the crowd cheers their local champion.

MUSIC STARTS. Heavy bass. A pulsing beat. Maggie turns to see all the high school girls rush the track to get a closer look at Brandon Gill on the FLATBED STAGE.

BRANDON

(addressing the crowd)

I got any ladies out here wanna swing with me?

Brandon starts in with his radio hit, Porch Swing Lovin'. Maggie watches as he works the crowd into a jumping frenzy.

CUT TO:

19 EXT. B. DADDY'S BAR - NIGHT

19

The parking lot at B. Daddy's is PACKED with cars and trucks. The drinking began hours ago, so it's already pretty rowdy.

20 INT. B. DADDY'S BAR - WOMEN'S BATHROOM - NIGHT 20

The mirror is crammed with women checking their faces. Maggie puts in hoop earrings while Kim and Mary spray their hair. She wants to look good for Wyatt.

MAGGIE

(touching the earrings)

And these aren't too big? A little too trash?

MARY

Maggie, with these babbas, trash works. Nobody likes to say it, but it's true.

21

INT. B. DADDY'S BAR - NIGHT

21

Wanda stocks the freezers. Kell is taking beer orders. The place is wall to wall.

WANDA

How are we on change?

KELL

I'll raid the tip jar if I got to.

Maggie leans over the bar to talk to her mother.

MAGGIE

You sure you don't need help?

WANDA

(pours her a shot)

We can handle it. Here, shoot this.

And try to have some fun.

Maggie takes a shot and looks over at her husband and Keough having an intense conversation with Roger Macon. She awkwardly hangs back.

KEOUGH

We's at the Cleveland Speedway. Saw y'all's sticker on Eddie Tate's car. You know Wyatt's smoked that arrogant bastard every time they nose up.

MACON

Eddie hasn't been at his best this year. But he's raced more track than you. He's raced the El Dora 100, and won it.

KEOUGH

It costs money to compete on that level. You're talkin' just under ten grand to prep your car, make it through five days of "heat" runs just to qualify for the "A" main.

Wyatt leans in and stops Keough's rambling. He speaks from the heart.

WYATT

Look. Mr. Macon. I got a family. And I keep a full time job at the beanery and work all night on my cars just so I can stay on the track. It's taken its toll on my kids... and my wife. And I know there's gonna be a day when I gotta put all this behind me.

(Wyatt sees Maggie)

But it's all I know how to do. And I just need a little help.

Maggie watches as Macon, Keough, and Wyatt shake hands. Macon picks up his jacket and leaves out the front.

MAGGIE

How'd it go?

KEOUGH

Whole lotta nuthin'. I'm goin' home. See y'all at church.

Keough is off. Wyatt tosses his beer in the barrel next to him. *CRASH*. He's in a bad mood.

WYATT

Gonna get another beer. You want one?

Maggie follows him to the bar. She takes her beer and looks up into his eyes. She wants to put his mind at ease.

MAGGIE

Hey, darlin'... let it go. Put your arms around me. Come on.

(Wyatt allows her to put his arms around her)

You know, I never get tired of watching you win.

She's getting playful, leaning in for a kiss. Her hand moves between his legs, but Wyatt flinches.

WYATT

I swear, Maggie, I don't know which way is up with you. This whole year you been putting me on notice.

Huffing around the house, rolling your eyes. You tense up when I touch you, now you're all over me. Where you been?

MAGGIE

Where've I been? Raisin' our kids
for one. Or do you think they get
grown by magic?

WYATT

(not listening)

And every time I get to talkin' on
racing... even just a little... you
let me know, pretty damn quick,
that you could give a shit.

MAGGIE

Cuz it'd be nice if you and me
weren't always talking about you
and YOUR CAR. I been bucklin' you
in for half my life, Wyatt. When it
comes to racing, I've heard it all
before.

WYATT

Oh yeah? What's my favorite type of
dirt to race on?

MAGGIE

Alabama gumbo.

WYATT

It's Arkansas gumbo.

MAGGIE

It's dirt! You really wanna argue
about dirt?

Wyatt starts walking away. Maggie calls after him.

MAGGIE

You coming home?

WYATT

I always do.

MAGGIE

To our bed or you gonna sleep on
the couch again?

WYATT

Our bed's been pretty cold lately.
At least the couch's got cable.

Maggie is hurt. She storms out of the bar.

Wyatt knows he went too far.

CUT TO:

22 INT. MAGGIE & WYATT'S HOME - NIGHT

22

Jasper and Uncle Faye have fallen asleep in the front room.
CUTS OF: Maggie taking off her uncle's shoes and putting a
blanket over him. She does the same with Jasper.

A wedding photo of her and Wyatt hangs on the wall behind the
table lamp. She takes it down and holds it in her hands. They
were so happy once. How did they get so lost?

She turns off the light. *Click.*

CUT TO BLACK

23 INT. MOTEL - NIGHT

23

Click. Wyatt turns on the bathroom light.

He is shirtless and sweaty. He looks at himself in the mirror
with self loathing. He washes his hands. His face. His chest.

SALLY PRICE
We can smell soap, too.

Wyatt looks back at Sally Price sprawled on the motel bed.
She is wearing panties and her suit jacket.

WYATT
This is the last time we're doing this.

SALLY PRICE
I've heard that before. There's
times I make the same promise.

Wyatt puts on his jeans. Sally unhooks her SUN PIN on her
lapel and twirls it between her fingers.

SALLY PRICE
Don't fool yourself, Wyatt. This is
as good as it's gonna get. Life in
the fast lane at the No-Tell Motel.

WYATT
You know, you can smile and turn a
man's head. Make 'em feel like
they're on top of the world.
(MORE)

But after ~~WYATT~~ ~~you~~ ~~turn~~ ~~you~~ turn
into the Goddamn Grim Reaper.

Sally stands, half naked and defiant. She wraps Wyatt's coat around his shoulders and stares him in the eye.

SALLY PRICE
That was never a problem before.

She leans in to kiss him. Wyatt pulls away and is out the door.

SALLY PRICE
Tune in Monday for highlights.

CUT TO:

24 EXT. MAGGIE & WYATT'S HOME - MORNING

24

Tap, tap, tap. Wyatt wakes up in his tow truck. He looks out the window to see Maggie holding a cup of coffee.

25 INT. MAGGIE & WYATT'S HOME - KITCHEN - MORNING

25

The family eats breakfast in silence.

MAGGIE
Did you tell your Daddy about
Saturday practice?

JASPER
On Saturday, my ball coach says
parents can come with a glove. If
they wanna help out.

WYATT
Why don't you go get my glove out
in the shed.

Jasper smiles and bolts out the door.

Maggie takes a deep breath and is ambushed by a sudden rush of sadness. She tries to hold back tears.

MAGGIE
We used to not be like this. And I
don't know what to do.

Wyatt reaches out and earnestly takes her hand in his. He feels terrible. He tries to soothe her.

WYATT

Oh, Maggie. You don't gotta do anything. It's all me. I'm just a little messed up right now.

(a thought)

Hey... hey, what do you say we drop the kids off at Mommy Wanda's... and you and me go down to Shakey's like we used to. Get some milk shakes.

MAGGIE

(her heart melts)

Really? You'd wanna do that?

WYATT

Maybe go down to the pond. Put a blanket on the back of the truck...

They can't help their love for each other. They desperately kiss across the table - tears and tongues. It's been so long. It feels so good.

Jasper dashes in, interrupting them.

JASPER

Daddy, if I'm late, I gotta run three extra laps around the field. You wanna do 'em with me?

WYATT

Go'on and get in the truck.

Jasper dashes off again. Wyatt and Maggie laugh at themselves over their burst of passion. There's hope in the house again.

MAGGIE

I'll be over at the field soon as I finish workin' at the home.

WYATT

You gonna bring your mitt?

MAGGIE

Just might have to.

Wyatt slips into his coat. Maggie straightens the lapel, revealing Sally Price's DIAMOND SUN PIN tagged to the collar.

MAGGIE

What's this?

Wyatt looks at the pin. His eyes betray him.

WYATT

(throws it in the trash)

Somebody must have pinned that on
me last night. Okay, so... I'll see
you in a bit? Maybe get some lunch?

Maggie looks down in the trash. Her lip quivers. She can
barely talk as her heart breaks.

MAGGIE

Are you sleepin' with somebody?

The question is direct, freezing Wyatt in his tracks.

Guilty.

WYATT

Cuz of an earring?

MAGGIE

It's a pin, Wyatt. A diamond pin.

(waits)

And... there's been nights...

WYATT

Jasper's waitin'.

Wyatt escapes out the door. Maggie is dizzy with hurt and
confusion. She pleads with him.

MAGGIE

Wyatt, wait, you can't leave...

WYATT

You're making something outta
nothing, Mag. I'll see you later
on, okay? Okay?

Maggie closes the door. She covers her mouth to choke back
her tears.

CUT TO:

26

INT. CHURCH NURSING HOME - DAY

26

Uncle Faye finishes a funny story, causing the ladies to
cackle. Wanda is playing with Shelby on her lap, dancing her
before a gracious old woman.

MAGGIE

Okay, now... get your legs under
you...

Maggie is helping lift MABEL (80's) out of her wheelchair and place her in a comfortable chair by the window.

We can see it in her face, Maggie's thoughts are on that pin.

MABEL

Thank you, dear...

Maggie then tries to fold up the wheelchair but it won't work. She yanks on the locks and struggles.

SNAP! It closes tight on her finger.

MAGGIE

Ouch! GOD... SON-OF-A... BITCH!

The whole place goes quiet. She's never cursed before them. Maggie covers her mouth as tears roll down her face. She turns to her mother.

MAGGIE

(broken-hearted)

He's... he's lyin' to me, Momma...

Wanda rushes to her side and takes her out of the room.

CUT TO:

27

INT. MAGGIE & WYATT'S HOME - LATE DAY

27

Jasper and Shelby sit on the porch. Jasper looks ill with confusion as Maggie shoves clothes into a duffel bag. Wyatt is leaning in the doorway. His head bowed in shame.

WYATT

You don't have to do this. I'll leave. You and the kids don't have to go.

(Wyatt touches her arm)

Maggie...

MAGGIE

DON'T YOU TOUCH ME!

Her shout stuns everyone. She lowers her voice.

MAGGIE

You gonna tell me who it is? Or is it too many to remember?

(marches out the door)

Shut the door, Jasper.

Jasper obeys.

28

EXT. MOMMY WANDA'S - FRONT PORCH - LATE DAY

28

Wanda steps out on to her porch to see Maggie's station wagon hissing and sputtering up her drive. It is a two story home with a wrap-around porch. A sizeable barn sits to the North.

KELL'S TRAILER is parked out back. Kell sips a beer standing in his doorway, keeping a respectful distance.

WANDA

Alright. I'm gonna need help cutting peaches if I'm gonna make homemade ice cream.

(touches Jasper's head)

It's gonna be alright, baby.

29

INT. MOMMA'S HOUSE - MAGGIE'S OLD ROOM - NIGHT

29

Maggie makes sure Jasper is comfortable in her old bedroom. A bed is shoved into a corner with a dresser covered in her old stickers.

Tears well up in Jasper's eyes as he stares at the ceiling.

JASPER

Momma. You gotta shoot me straight.
We goin' back home?

MAGGIE

(tucks him in)

Jasper, I don't know if we are. I'm still figurin' that out.

(rubs his head)

But we can make this fun. Remember them fish fries we used to have?

Everybody'd come over... and we'd pull out our guitars and sing all night long with Uncle Faye and B.Daddy? Maybe we can do that again.

(kisses his head)

You got my heart, Jasper.

Electric guitar feedback sounds from outside, a heaven splitting: GRRRRRREEEEEECH! BYOOOOUUUUW!

MAGGIE

What the...

30 EXT. MOMMY WANDA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

30

Maggie follows the deafening guitar licks towards the barn. She yanks the door open with a grunt.

31 INT. MOMMY WANDA'S - THE BARN - NIGHT

31

Under the glow of clamp lights, Kell and his two buddies, WOODY (25) and WADE (25), are jamming a rowdy Country riff.

Wade, a gentle giant with a lip stud, is playing the drums. Woody is the bass player, wearing sunglasses and a scowl. Kell has his back to the door, grinding his electric guitar.

B. Daddy's OLD FORD TRUCK sits off to the side, rusting.

Maggie picks up a wrench and tosses it at the wall. It smashes an old mirror. The boys stop and turn.

MAGGIE

What are you doin'?

KELL

You broke my Skynard mirror. Won that at the fair when I was in...

MAGGIE

(interrupting)

Kell, I don't care! Now, I don't know what you all've done before, but we got little ones in this house and I just put 'em to bed. Unplug. And get out!

Maggie turns to leave but the mirror from the TRUCK snags her arm and spins her around. She grips her arm, cringing.

Tears well up in her eyes as she kicks her Daddy's truck with her boots. BAM! BAM! BAM!

32 EXT. MOMMY WANDA'S - THE BARN - CONTINUOUS

32

Maggie marches back to the house. Kell follows.

KELL

Maggie? Maggie Lynn!

MAGGIE

Don't talk at me like you're Daddy!
Cuz you're not!

Maggie continues her march as Kell shouts at her back.

KELL

I'm paying the note on his house.
Working his bar. I don't see how I
can be more like daddy, short of
dyin'.

Maggie is gone.

FADE TO:

33 INT. FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH - MORNING

33

It is a full congregation this morning, singing.

CONGREGATION

*Then sings my soul, My Saviour God,
to thee, how great Thou art, how
great Thou art...*

Maggie looks on Mommy Wanda's hymnal as she holds Shelby. Jasper cautiously looks to the other side of the Church.

He sees his daddy, Wyatt, standing alone across the aisle. Wyatt waves with a smile. Jasper turns back to his hymnal. Wyatt is wounded. He can no longer keep singing.

REVEREND MILLS

Let us pray.

CUT TO:

34 EXT. MOMMY WANDA'S - FRONT PORCH - DAY

34

The rain is even and steady. Wanda is reading a story to Shelby. They rock gently on the porch swing as Jasper leans against the railing.

Maggie steps out onto the porch. She kneels down and gives her son a kiss on the head.

WANDA

Bottom finally fell out.

Something catches Maggie's ear. Music from the barn.

35

INT. MOMMY WANDA'S - THE BARN - DAY

35

Woody and Wade are playing their instruments. Wade sees Maggie enter the barn and kills his drumming.

WOODY

Kell said we could play during the day time.

MAGGIE

It's okay. I wanted to say I'm sorry about the other night. It's Woody and Wade, isn't it?

WOODY

(correcting, pointing)
Yeah. He's Wade. I'm Woody.

Maggie looks over at the dented door of her daddy's truck.

MAGGIE

My Daddy's truck.
(touching the dent)
He'd a wupped me if he ever saw me do something like this.

KELL

I think he'd be impressed.

She turns to see Kell holding a few six packs. He hands them to all, Maggie included. Pops and fizzes all around.

MAGGIE

You gotten it to run yet?

KELL

Tried everything. New starter.
Fresh plugs. Nothing.

She turns to see a few pages of yellow legal paper on a music stand. A song is written on the pages titled, Back Home.

MAGGIE

You wrote this?

Kell straps on his electric guitar, plugs in and strums a few chords. He takes a breath and counts it off to the boys.

KELL

One, two, three, four...

Wade and Woody kick in.

Kell knows the lyrics from memory. He closes his eyes and sings the chorus. Maggie forgot how good he sounded.

She reads the paper and sings along in country harmony. Kell nods to her, encouraging her. The siblings are beginning to find their way back to each other.

The lyrics are rooted in heritage. The song is about their family's true love for their home. Their Mountain Home.

KELL

(cutting it off)

If you're gonna sing it, then play it. My acoustic's right behind you. If you still remember how to use it.

Maggie grins, challenged. She turns to open the guitar case.

Jasper has been hiding at the door. He runs toward the house.

36 EXT. MOMMY WANDA'S - FRONT PORCH - DAY

36

Jasper splashes through the mud and tries to stop. He slides on his feet a good eight feet. Wanda gasps.

WANDA

Goodness, Jasper.

JASPER

Momma and Kell are singing in the barn!

37 INT. MOMMY WANDA'S - THE BARN - CONTINUOUS

37

Maggie strums to tune. Her fingers are remembering how to play. She picks at the strings. A touch sloppy, but impressive.

KELL

(showing her as he plays)

Good. We're in D when it starts out then it goes down to...

MAGGIE

I got it.

(counts it off)

Two... three... four...

Maggie sings the chorus again, still a bit tentative.

KELL

Good. Stop soundin' so pretty. Put
more outlaw in it.

The rest of the band comes in on the harmony. It's a bit
rough at the start but builds with energy. Even Kell grins.

WANDA AND JASPER

(cheering)

Wooo!

The band turns to see Wanda, Shelby, and Jasper standing in
the doorway to the barn. They are applauding and grinning.

MAGGIE

Don't sneak up like that.

Wanda takes out her mobile phone and starts dialing.

WANDA

I'm calling my sister. Her kids 'bout
to pitch a fit with this rain.

(into the phone)

Lorie. Call up Mary Jean and the
cousins, tell 'em to come on up to
the house.

KELL

Whoa! Wait, what?

MAGGIE

Momma...

JASPER

(ecstatic, jumping around)

Are we gonna sing? Mommy Wanda!
Mommy Wanda, are we gonna sing?

WANDA

I've had it with these gloomy days.
This is my house. This is my barn,
and my family...

(to Jasper)

And yes, darling, we're gonna sing.

CUT TO:

Uncles, aunts and cousins file into the barn with potato
salad, fried chicken and family love.

The band is playing Country Boy Can Survive by Hank Williams
Jr. It's LIVE KARAOKE and Jasper has the mic.

JASPER

*The preacher man says it's the end
of time and the Mississippi River
she's a goin' dry*

Mommy Wanda is handing out COUNTRY SONG BOOKS to the kids.

WANDA

Page 13! We're on page 13.

Maggie is digging through Kell's electric guitars. She downs some beer and plugs in as Kell plays acoustic.

UNCLE FAYE

Y'all started without me.

Uncle Faye seats himself next to Wade at the drums with his fiddle. It's a big family and they're having a blast.

The family cheers Jasper as he finishes the verse. He hands the mic to Mommy Wanda.

WANDA

No, let some of your cousins sing.

JASPER

Please...

WANDA

(takes the mic and sings)
I can plow a field all day long
I can catch catfish from dusk till dawn

Big cheers for Wanda as she takes a verse.

Maggie and Kell leap toward the same standing microphone as they joyously take command of the chorus. The family cheers, remembering how good both of them sound together.

MAGGIE & KELL

Because you can't starve us out
And you can't make us run
Cause one-of-'em old boys raisin'
ole shotgun

Maggie drops to her knees next to her son. They sing together, united.

MAGGIE & JASPER

Country folks can survive
Country folks can survive

Big cheers. The family hasn't been this happy in years.

39

EXT./INT. MOMMY WANDA'S - NIGHT

39

The last of the cars are leaving. Maggie, Kell and Wanda wave from the front porch.

MAGGIE

Jasper, go on in and take a shower before you go to bed. You got school tomorrow.

WANDA

I'm on it. Come on, Hank Jr..

Wanda takes Jasper inside leaving Kell and Maggie alone. Maggie starts cleaning up, tossing beer bottles in a bag.

KELL

I got something real serious to say. And I need you to listen.

MAGGIE

(keeps cleaning)

Okay.

KELL

There's a buddy of mine runs a club in Nashville, it's called the Purple Room. I used to sing there before Daddy passed. We play it right, I think I can swing us a gig.

MAGGIE

Do what?

KELL

We should start singing together. Like we used to when we was kids. Like we did tonight.

Maggie stops cleaning when she sees her brother is serious.

KELL

I got some money saved up. Not much. But enough for hotels and gas.

(suddenly excited)

Momma'd look after Shelby at the home. Wyatt'll take the kids at night. We borrow the RV for a few months. It'd be like our tour bus.

MAGGIE

Are you drunk? I can't leave for that long. I got kids. You'd know what that means if you'd ever nursed anything in your life other'n a bad hangover.

KELL

Come on, sis. For once in your life... think about yourself.
(he's got her attention)
You always loved singin', Maggie.
Remember how happy it made us? I just wanna help, that's all.

MAGGIE

(a little pissed)

You wanna help? Go'on and fix my station wagon. It's been overheatin' all week. How am I supposed to get Jasper to school and help Momma if I don't have a workin' car?

KELL

(defeated)

I'll take it in tomorrow.

He walks away hurt and Maggie can feel it. She follows.

MAGGIE

I had fun tonight.
(he doesn't respond)
Kell?

Kell steps up into his trailer and shuts the door behind him.

CUT TO:

40

INT. MOMMY WANDA'S - LIVING ROOM - NEXT MORNING

40

Maggie is folding clothes as she absently watches TV.

Wanda holds Shelby in her arms as she walks toward the door.

WANDA

Come on, Jasper! I'm dropping you at school.

Jasper runs in with his backpack and baseball bat. He quickly kisses Maggie and bolts out the door.

JASPER

Bye, momma... love you...

MAGGIE

Love you, too.

(to Wanda)

I'll come get her after I finish.

WANDA

Just like old times, last night.

MAGGIE

(a warm smile)

Yes, ma'am.

Wanda closes the door as Maggie returns to folding. She hums to herself as she folds a little Shelby shirt.

She then whips open what she thinks is another Jasper shirt but it's much too big. It's an old football jersey of her husband's. Across the back in big letters reads: McDODD 33.

Maggie's heart breaks as she buries her face into the old jersey and cries.

MAGGIE

Oh, Wyatt... why... why...

It's a big sob. She uses the shirt to wipe her eyes and that's when she sees Sally Price doing the weather on TV.

SALLY PRICE

*It got to be a soggy weekend by Sunday,
but clear skies are in our future...*

Maggie zeroes in on Kelly's new SUN PIN - the same design on her microphone. She begins to piece it all together: the pin, Sally pushing her aside, handing her husband the flag.

Her sorrow is replaced with something she hasn't felt in a long time - RAGE.

Maggie grabs a pair of jeans, tight from the wash. She grunts as she pushes her legs through. She stomps her feet into her boots, ready to go kick some ass.

Maggie marches out to her station wagon. The hood is up and her radiator is gone.

She kicks the front grill and slams the hood down revealing her Daddy's OLD FORD TRUCK in the barn.

She climbs in and flips down the visor. The keys drop into her hand. She tries to crank the ignition. *REN-NI-NI-NI-NI...*

MAGGIE

Come on... please, Daddy...
please... DAMMIT DADDY!

VVVRROOOOOOMMM! The truck sputters to life. Black smoke billows out the back tail pipe. Hank Jr.'s, *Kaw-liga*, plays on her Daddy's 8-Track.

Her fury returns with each push on the gas pedal. She grips the steering and cranks the old truck into DRIVE.

42 EXT. DOWNTOWN JELLICO - MORNING

42

Old men hold their hats as the old Ford roars by. Maggie shifts gears like she's racing at the Dirt Ring. The truck careens around corners and hauls ass through town.

43 EXT. LIBRARY/TV STATION - MORNING

43

A SATELLITE DISH points skyward behind the JELLICO LIBRARY.

The truck skids to a stop in the parking lot. Maggie, with the fury of a woman wronged, marches up to the front door in damp jeans and a red tank top.

44 INT. LIBRARY/TV STATION - MORNING

44

Maggie knows all the librarians and they know her. BETTY GRACE waves to her from behind her desk.

BETTY GRACE

Mornin', Maggie.

MAGGIE

(on a mission)

Where y'all do the news?

BETTY GRACE

Down the hall in the back.

She passes a group of pre-school kids being read a story. She turns toward the hall but has to move around two LIBRARY VOLUNTEERS holding a BIG PAPER BANNER that reads: LIBRARY BAKE SALE.

LIBRARY VOLUNTEER

Hey, Maggie. What'chu gonna bring
this Saturday?

MAGGIE

(doesn't break her stride)
Rice Krispy Treats.

BAM! She pushes through the door that reads STUDIO.

45 INT. LIBRARY/TV STATION - STUDIO - MORNING

45

Everyone flinches and turns toward Maggie marching through the door.

Holt mans the camera. Co-anchor, ALEX CORNWEL (30's) is seated at his station. Sally Price is standing before a green-screen, pointing at invisible cold fronts.

Maggie marches right up to her for all of Jellico to see.

MAGGIE

I got a question for you. When you
were screwin' my husband, did you
see that ring on his finger?

SALLY PRICE

(on TV, to Alex)
Go get Officer Byron.

The camera catches Alex bolting for the door.

SALLY PRICE

Get that camera off me, Holt.

Holt pans the camera away. Maggie stands her ground as Sally tries to keep her cool.

SALLY PRICE

Whatever is going on between you
and Wyatt is none of my business.
Now, if you would excuse us...

MAGGIE

I'll deal with Wyatt on my own.
Right now I'm dealing with you.

46 INT. PRIMACY NURSING HOME - CONTINUOUS

46

MILDRED (80) rolls up to Wanda in a wheel chair.

MILDRED

Maggie's cussin' out the weather
gal on the TV.

47

INT. BOLTON BEANS WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

47

Keough, dressed in his BOLTON BEANS WORK SUIT, is running at full speed past the canning conveyer belt. He spots Wyatt driving a fork lift carrying a wrapped pallet of boxed beans.

KEOUGH

Hey! WYATT! Your wife's pickin' a
fight on the news!

48

INT. LIBRARY/TV STATION - STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

48

SALLY PRICE

Holt. Would you please take this
woman outside...

MAGGIE

Holt and I were in grade school
long before you came along. He
knows better than to mess with me.
And that's a hell of a lot more
than I can say for you, sugar.

Sally doesn't see that Holt is slowly inching the camera BACK INTO POSITION.

SALLY PRICE

You need to understand. People who
are in the public spotlight tend to
find... comfort with each other.

49

INT. BOLTON BEANS - BREAK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

49

A dozen people are crammed into the break room watching the TV. The picture slowly moves back into place.

WORKERS

It's on! Hey! It's comin' back!

Wyatt hangs on every word.

SALLY PRICE

Wyatt and I have had a tremendous
amount of pressure put on us
because of our... celebrity...

50

INT. LIBRARY/TV STATION - STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

50

MAGGIE

Celebrity? Honey, bleaching your hair and shaving your cooch does not make you a centerfold.

(steps closer)

This town laughs at you. We can't blow our nose or take a dump without you bouncing up trying to cut a ribbon.

51

INT. B. DADDY'S BAR - CONTINUOUS

51

Kell chuckles as he watches his sister on the TV in the bar.

KELL

Well, look who finally showed up.

52

INT. LIBRARY/TV STATION - STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

52

SALLY PRICE

I've had enough of this. Get out!

MAGGIE

Let me make this clear as the bright blue sky, weather girl.

(so close she could bite)

56

You don't take what don't belong to you.

56

SALLY PRICE

Are you finished?

MAGGIE

I said what I had to say.

SALLY PRICE

Good. Because I have better things to do than be lectured by some mountain trash sour puss.

MAGGIE

What did you call me?

SALLY PRICE

You heard...

CRACK! Maggie lands a solid right to Sally's jaw. She stumbles back on to the ANCHOR'S DESK in shock.

MAGGIE
HOW SOUR DID THAT TASTE?

53 VARIOUS SHOTS OF THE TOWN REACTIONS 53

The break room at the Beanery explodes with shouts. Kell hops up off his bar stool and cheers. The old ladies shout.

54 INT. LIBRARY/TV STATION 54

Sally glares back through her bangs and CHARGES AT MAGGIE. She slams Maggie into the green screen. Screams, slaps, and slurs are heard as Hank Jr.'s Kaw-liqa returns.

55 INT. LIBRARY/TV STATION - LATER 55

OFFICER BYRON is pulling a kicking Maggie Lynn into the hall. Sally is being held back by Holt and Alex. Her lip is cracked. Her hair a tangled nest.

MAGGIE OFFICER BYRON
You want any more of that, Maggie... Maggie, cut it out!
you know where to find me!

Officer Byron is carrying Maggie down the hall.

MAGGIE
I can walk on my own, Byron!
(squirms free and stands)
I SAID I CAN WALK ON MY OWN!

CUT TO:

56 INT. JELLICO SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT - DAY 56

Maggie sits in her cell, tapping out a rhythm on her leg. She is singing a song of her own creation with strength and joy.

Her voice echoes through the HOLDING AREA, singing about "tapping her POWDER KEG." She finishes the verse and grins.

MAGGIE
Huh... that ain't bad.

57 INT. JELLICO SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT - FRONT OFFICE - DAY 57

Kell, Wanda and Shelby are waiting for her. Maggie reaches out and lifts her baby girl up above her head, high on life.

MAGGIE

Hey, Precious! How was your day?

WANDA

(touching her swollen lip)

Lord, Maggie...

MAGGIE

You should see the other girl.

(to Kell)

I want you to call up Woody and Wade. Get the gear down to B.Daddy's tonight. I say we play some songs and sell some beer.

KELL

Can I talk to you for a sec?

58

EXT. JELLICO SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT - DAY

58

Kell opens the door for his sister. She follows him outside. She paces as she talks, barely able to contain her newfound energy.

MAGGIE

I think we got at least three covers we can fake our way through. But then we got that Back Home song you wrote...

KELL

Maggie. What are you doing?

MAGGIE

Raisin' some hell. Wanna help?

CUT TO:

59

EXT. B. DADDY'S - NIGHT

59

A big crowd has gathered outside of B. Daddy's Bar. Wyatt pulls up in his truck. He can already hear the gossip.

60

INT. B. DADDY'S - NIGHT

60

Wanda is behind the bar selling beer solo tonight and she couldn't be more slammed.

WANDA

Y'all need to be patient. I've only
got two arms.

Maggie, Kell, and Woody plug in on stage as Wade tests the drums. The crowd is much bigger than Maggie anticipated.

Kell turns to see Uncle Faye dressed in a bolo tie and boots. He proudly steps toward Maggie with his banjo case in hand.

UNCLE FAYE

I'd be honored to play with y'all,
if you'll have me.

Maggie kisses his cheek and throws her arms around him.

UNCLE FAYE

Just get me a chair to sit on. I
can't rock and roll like y'all do.

Maggie sees her friends, Mary and Kim.

KIM

Your hair looked so good on TV.

MARY

I haven't seen you punch like that
since we got drunk at homecoming.

Maggie's heart jumps up into her throat as she locks eyes with Wyatt in the back of the bar. Her confidence melts.

KELL

(counting down the beat)

One... two... three... four....

Wade and Woody hold a steady beat as Kell strums a few lines. Kell looks back at his sister. She looks ill and terrified.

KELL

You gonna sing?

MAGGIE

I don't think I can do this.

KELL

This was your idea, Mag.

MAGGIE

I know. And I'm beginning to think
that it was bad one. My gut's all
in a knot. I don't... I didn't
think he'd show.

Kell turns and spies Wyatt standing in the back of the crowd.

KELL

Maggie... you can keep puttin' your life on hold... but I'm over it.

Kell marches up to the mic and sings in public for the first time in years.

As Kell sings Back Home, Maggie inches closer to her mic.

Kell gets a surprise as his sister comes in on the harmony. She stays looking at her brother for strength.

The band kicks into gear. The beat is powerful and infectious. Kell steps away from his mic and puts his sister on the spot.

KELL

Your turn...

Maggie sings her heart out, gaining more control, more confidence.

Wyatt watches in awe as his wife sings solo. She looks like the girl he fell in love with: fearless and fine as hell.

He gets bumped to the side as the whole bar starts an aggressive line dance. Arms punch into the air as clay-caked boots pound the floor.

MAGGIE

Come on, Jellico. Let me hear ya!

The room erupts with applause and hollers as Wade closes down the song with a big finish.

Maggie looks at her brother and grins. They can't believe it.

CUT TO:

61

EXT. B. DADDY'S BAR - NIGHT

61

The whole crowd from inside has now moved outside. The band packs up their gear. Maggie hands a piece of paper to Kell.

KELL

What's this?

MAGGIE

It's a song I wrote when I was in
the slammer. Wanna meet up tomorrow
in the barn and kick its tires?

Kell smiles. It's clear that they both need each other.

KELL

Wyatt Riot in your rear view.

Maggie glares over her shoulder. The crowd gets quiet. Maggie marches toward her daddy's truck. Wyatt follows.

WYATT

(touches her arm)

Maggie, would you stop...

Maggie yanks away and turns toward Wyatt, backing him up a step. The crowd reacts: "Ooo's" and whispers.

MAGGIE

I'll ask you not to touch me again.

WYATT

You got this whole town snickering.
Least you can do is talk to me.

She hops in her truck and slams the door. Fires it up.

MAGGIE

You broke my heart, Wyatt. And you
weren't supposed to do that.

She spits dirt all over Wyatt as she guns the gas.

CUT TO:

62

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD / MAGGIE'S TRUCK - NIGHT

62

Maggie is singing along with her Daddy's 8-track: Alabama's Tennessee River. She's on top of the world.

Wyatt rolls up next to her in his tow truck. He shouts through the window.

WYATT

Are you gonna talk to me?

MAGGIE

Can you hear this!

WYATT

Hear what?

MAGGIE

Let me turn it up!

Maggie flips the bird to her husband and guns the gas. The two race through the winding mountain roads.

WYATT

Would you pull over before you get us killed.

Maggie pulls ahead and skids around a tight corner. Wyatt barely makes the corner taking out a row of mailboxes.

WYATT

MAGGIE! PUT ON YOUR BRAKES!

Wyatt steers around the embankment, accidentally hitting Maggie's truck.

MAGGIE

You hit my daddy's truck... YOU HIT MY DADDY'S TRUCK!

BAM! Maggie slams her truck into Wyatt's tow truck. BAM! She hits it again, sending both trucks skidding through the mud.

Maggie screams as her truck spins to one side of the road and skids to a stop. Wyatt's truck slides into a ditch.

They both exit their vehicles, slamming their doors and shouting.

MAGGIE

You got a lot of nerve swappin' paint with me, Wyatt McDodd! If you weren't the daddy of my kids...

WYATT

Goddamn crazy! You could'a gotten us both killed with that bullshit!

Maggie picks up a few rocks and hurls one at him. He ducks. It shatters his windshield. CRASH!

MAGGIE

You stay on your side of the street!

WYATT

You put those down...

MAGGIE

I'm the one bringin' the heat at
ball practice. Where you been?

They circle each other. Maggie has a rock cocked.

MAGGIE

Why'd you do it, Wyatt? What, were
you horny?

WYATT

I don't... I don't know.

MAGGIE

You don't know? YOU DON'T KNOW!?

Maggie lets a rock fly. Wyatt leaps over it and almost falls in the mud.

WYATT

You put them rocks down or I'll
take 'em from ya.

MAGGIE

I'd like to see you trYYYYY...

She screams as Wyatt charges her and grips her around the waist. Wyatt's momentum slams them both into Maggie's truck.

MAGGIE

Let go of ME! LET... UGHH!

Maggie pushes off the side of her truck with both boots. The two go flying backwards into the mud. *SPLASH!*

They twist and wrestle, slick from the mud. It's intense. They gasp for air.

MAGGIE

Did ya take her to the pond? Did ya
lay under the stars?

WYATT

No. It was a cheap hotel room.

That pissed her off. She punches him a few times before he can pull her back down.

They collapse on each other, panting into each other's mouths. Their eyes meet. Their tongues touch. The kissing begins.

It's deep kissing. Muddy kissing. Don't give a fuck kissing. Their troubles vanish as they slide down the steep road.

He rolls up her shirt and kisses her stomach. She gasps for air and wraps her legs around his chest. She grips him around the jaw to bring his lips to her own, devouring him.

WYATT

I love you... I love you so much...

Maggie snaps out of it and pushes him away. The two slide apart and try to catch their breath.

She makes it to her feet, eager to stand and get control.

WYATT

You coming home?

MAGGIE

No.

WYATT

So we're through? Is that what you're saying?

(Maggie can't respond)

Then what do you want, Mag?

MAGGIE

I want the RV.

The statement surprises them both. Maggie feels stronger than ever.

MAGGIE

I want it for two months. Cuz me and Kell are takin' a trip. Gonna get back into singin'.

WYATT

What do you need the RV for? You aren't taking the kids, are you?

MAGGIE

Naw. They're stayin' here with you. The RV is for my band.

Maggie walks back up the muddy hill. Wyatt follows after her.

WYATT

Your band?

MAGGIE

You heard right. And I'm gonna
drive that RV to Nashville, be a
big ole Country music star. Then
I'm gonna buy this mountain and
kick your cheatin' ass off it.

She cranks her truck to life with a roar.

CUT TO:

63

INT. MOMMY WANDA'S - BARN - THE RV - DAY

63

Uncle Faye knocks on the door. He is holding a suitcase, a
BANJO CASE and a RIFLE CASE.

UNCLE FAYE

Permission to come aboard?

KELL

Granted.

(points to the rifle)
Just keep that puppy in the pen.

Kell and Maggie load up the RV with their equipment.
Amplifiers, microphone stands, half a dozen guitar cases.

Woody arrives with his bass. Wade arrives, holding a kick
drum. The RV hasn't moved a foot and everyone is already
bumping into each other.

Mommy Wanda is holding Shelby on one hip and a shoebox of
cheese biscuits on the other. Breakfast is served.

Maggie removes three cases of beer but is stopped by Kell.

KELL

No, ma'am.

MAGGIE

Kell, there's no room in...

KELL

(takes them from her)

Not an option.

QUICK CUTS of all the boys respectfully kissing Wanda. Maggie
rocking Shelby in her arms. She is crying. Wanda approaches
and gives her daughter a kiss on the head.

MAGGIE

Momma....

WANDA

(takes Shelby)

Shhhh... Don't you worry. You know I
got these kids.

Maggie is surprised to see Wade in the driver's seat.

MAGGIE

Thanks, Wade but... I always take
her out.

WADE

Well, get to it.

Maggie sits in the driver's seat and cranks the gas. Music
blares: Willie Nelson's Whiskey River.

KELL

Crank that shit up!

An old war veteran, a drunk, two heavy metal rockers, and a
mom embark on their journey.

64

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD / INT. THE RV - MORNING

64

The RV tears down the road as the family sings together.

THE BAND

WHISKEY RIVER TAKE MY MIND!

65

EXT. DOWNTOWN JELLICO / INT. THE RV - DAY

65

The RV takes a sharp turn near the base of the mountains and
rolls down Main Street.

Maggie looks a little sad. Kell can see it. But then
something catches his eye out the window.

KELL

Number 33, round the outside...

MAGGIE

Take the wheel, Wade.

Wade takes the wheel as Maggie jumps to the passenger side
window and sticks her head out.

It's her boys. Wyatt drives the station wagon as Jasper waves
and shouts out the back window.

JASPER
MOMMA!

MAGGIE
JASPER!

JASPER
I LOVE YOU!

MAGGIE
I LOVE YOU SO MUCH, BABY! HELP YOUR
MOMMY WANDA WITH YOUR SISTER! AND
HELP YOUR DADDY!

JASPER
I WILL MOMMA!

Maggie catches her husband's gaze. Their future is uncertain.

An acoustic guitar and mandolin play together. It is a sad
tune of loss and loneliness.

Wyatt lets up on the gas. Maggie watches as the loves of her
life fade away in the distance.

FADE TO:

66 INT. THE RV - SINGING MONTAGE - DAY 66

The song continues as Maggie and Kell strum along on their
acoustic guitars. Uncle Faye is on his mandolin. Wade is
driving as Woody plucks Faye's banjo.

Maggie is singing, occasionally looking at her lyric pages.
The MUSIC MONTAGE CONTINUES.

67 EXT. STUCKEY'S OFF THE INTERSTATE - SINGING MONTAGE - LATE 67
DAY

Through the window we see the new band crammed around one
small table, eating burgers and cracking each other up.

68 INT. THE RV - SINGING MONTAGE - SUNSET 68

Back on the road. Maggie looks out the window at the passing
mountains. Her home is getting farther away as landscape
changes.

69 EXT. TENNESSEE FREEWAY - END OF MONTAGE - SUNSET 69

The RV's silhouette cuts through the burnt orange sky.

FADE TO:

70 INT. MAGGIE AND WYATT'S HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT 70

Shelby is in her high chair watching her daddy put random foods on the table for supper: three cans of Beanie Weenies, fruit roll-ups, grape sodas, bag of Funyuns.

Ding. He removes a pan from the microwave and scoops out some left-over HAMBURGER HELPER on to Jasper's plate.

WYATT

Supper's on. Get it while it's hot.

JASPER

Left-overs?

WYATT

Three things taste better the day after. Pepperoni pizza, enchiladas and Hamburger Helper.

JASPER

We got three boxes of it up in the cabinet. You could'a made it fresh.

WYATT

Ya heard that sayin': waste not, want not? You heard that, right?

JASPER

Well, don't waste it on me. I don't want it.

WYATT

(sits opposite Jasper)

Not one thing wrong with what you got in front of you. Now eat it. Just cuz you got it in your head to sulk and act like a little brat don't mean I'm gonna baby you like your momma.

Jasper suddenly explodes with rage, pushing both plates of Hamburger Helper all over Wyatt.

CRASH! Wyatt jumps to his feet as Jasper cocks a fist ready to rumble with his dad.

WYATT

Whoa! Whoa! WHOA!

Jasper fumes. Shelby stares. Wyatt holds his hand up in a gesture of peace.

WYATT

It's okay, Jasp. I had that comin'.

Wyatt leaves the kitchen. His head hangs low, ashamed.

CUT TO:

71 INT. THE RV - NIGHT

71

Maggie is asleep on the couch in the RV. Kell wakes her.

KELL

Mag. Wake up.

She opens her eyes. Everyone is asleep around her.

72 EXT. BROADWAY - NIGHT

72

They round the dark corner onto BROADWAY AVENUE in DOWNTOWN NASHVILLE. They are instantly bathed in electric light.

KELL

Welcome to progress!

The neon signs are everywhere: record shops, boot stores, night clubs, and tons of people. Maggie is overwhelmed.

KELL

You see how they got their bands up in the windows for you to pick and choose?

Maggie follows her brother through the thick crowd. Country bands are playing in all the windows from each club.

73 EXT. THE PURPLE ROOM - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

73

A thick crowd of people are gathered outside the two story club. THE PURPLE ROOM is rocking tonight.

KELL
Check out this joint.

Kell takes her by the arm and moves toward a window.

Maggie peeks through the window and sees HATCH MILLINGTON (30's) working the crowd with a rousing outlaw song.

Chills go up Maggie's spine. She looks at the crowd cheering.

CUT TO:

74 INT. HOTEL - MAGGIE'S ROOM - THE NEXT DAY 74

Maggie is blow-drying her hair and racing to get ready. She stubs her toe trying to find her boots. It's her first night playing in NASHVILLE.

KELL
(pounding on the door)
Maggie. I will leave your ass, so
help me Jesus!

75 EXT. HOTEL / INT. RV - LATE DAY 75

Maggie leaves her room. Her hair looks simple and hot - split down the middle and feathered back, old school.

She hops on the bus.

WOODY
Cool do, Mag.

MAGGIE
Thank you Woody. I was going for
Farrah Fawcett but I think I got
Joan Jett.

76 INT. THE PURPLE ROOM - BACK DOOR - NIGHT 76

Woody and Wade push equipment through the back door with Uncle Faye. Kell is talking to his old friend, KNOX (40s), who runs the Purple Room.

KNOX
I'd put four songs in your hopper,
maybe five. That's if they're
wanting an encore. But mostly they
don't. Not at this early hour.

KELL

So you're giving me the shit slot?

KNOX

If the shit slot means going up first, then yeah. And being that I haven't heard your band, I think that's fair.

(stops)

Kell, don't put me in an uncomfortable position. I know you and me go back... but I got a club to run. So if this doesn't work...?

KELL

I'll be the first to pack up our gear.

Kell crosses onto the stage. The band gathers around him.

KELL

Not gonna lie. This is probably gonna suck. We're the opener. Means we got a ball game over the bar and chatty Vandy girls gettin' their drink on. They're not gonna be listenin' really, so stick to covers. Shit they know.

The band breaks apart to finish setting up.

77

EXT. THE PURPLE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

77

The BOUNCER nods to BUCK (age 30), BRANDON GILL'S BODYGUARD. He knocks on the tour bus. The DRIVER opens the door.

BUCK

They're ready for him.

78

INT. THE PURPLE ROOM - A BIT LATER

78

There's a few squeals at the bar as Brandon Gill's entourage follows BUCK through the front door and up the stairs to the VIP BALCONY. Brandon wears a low brim black hat and shades.

79

INT. THE PURPLE ROOM - VIP BALCONY

79

Knox stands to greet Brandon and JEREMY CARTER (40), Brandon's manager. Hugs and handshakes all around.

BRANDON

It's been too long, Knox. How's your family?

KNOX

Good. My daughter's comin' to your concert next week.

BRANDON

(motions to Jeremy)

We'll get her backstage passes.

KNOX

(motions to the waitress)

Alice here can take your orders. Whatever you want is on the house.

JEREMY CARTER

Can we say the same for our location fee? Can that be on the house, too?

KNOX

What am I supposed to do about the business I lose when you all tape your show?

JEREMY CARTER

Having your bar featured on CMT isn't gonna hurt your business...

Brandon watches from above as the band warms up.

BRANDON

Stop tryin' to muscle the man, Jeremy. We bought the barn, let's put on a show.

80

INT. THE PURPLE ROOM - STAGE - CONTINUOUS

80

Kell motions Maggie to the stage. Maggie enters with no fanfare or applause. She steps up to the mic and adjusts it.

MAGGIE

Hey, y'all. We're the band.

The talking continues. A roar from the game at the bar.

The band starts in on a sweet, country lullaby.

MAGGIE

*As I sit here tonight the jukebox
playin'...*

No one is paying attention. Maggie looks at the patrons - obnoxiously shouting at the TV over the bar.

MAGGIE

(to Kell, off mic)
I left my kids for this?

KELL

Welcome to show business.

Maggie makes a decision. She picks up the mic stand at the base and sticks the microphone deep into the ON STAGE AMP.

GREEEEOOOOOOOWWWWWWWWW. MAJOR FEEDBACK. The whole club flinches like a bomb just went off. Everyone goes silent. Maggie repositions her mic and smiles at the BARTENDER.

MAGGIE

Hey, Mr. Bartender? I'm not asking you to turn it off. Just turn it down.

The BARTENDER obeys. Brandon and the others watch from above.

JEREMY CARTER

She's got my attention.

Kell looks at his sister with fear and awe in his eyes.

MAGGIE

(to the silent crowd)

Now, look, y'all... I gotta ask you to do me a favor. This is my first time singing on a stage in Nashville. And for a country girl from Jellico, it's a big-ole-deal. So we're gonna put the spurs to this one and I'm gonna sing my guts out for you. After that y'all can go about your business.

(turns to Kell)

Powder Keg.

KELL

That one's a little rusty.

MAGGIE

Then play it loud.

Kell yanks on the strings. An electric twang, relentless rhythm, like a machine gun.

Maggie holds no guitar on this song. She picks up a tambourine and slaps her hip.

It is the Powder Keq song she was singing in the jail cell.

The song is country through and through, accented by Uncle Faye's banjo playing. The tempo is all rock and roll with Woody's heavy bass rocking the club.

Kell nods to Maggie. *It's going good. Keep it up.*

The young crowd starts getting more involved. Girls dance. The crowd begins to rock out with the help of four dollar pitchers of Bud.

The band goes into a rocking instrumental. The Bartender turns off the TV. Jeremy turns to Knox.

JEREMY CARTER
What's this girl's name?

KNOX
I don't know.

BRANDON
(smiles)
It's Maggie. Maggie Lynn.

Maggie slaps the tambourine on her hip. She's got an edge to her performance, more aggressive, more sexual. She rips the mic off the stand and busts out with the bridge.

Brandon can't take his eyes off her. She owns the stage like a seasoned star.

Wade busts out with an impressive drum solo. Kell signals for the finish. BAM!

MAGGIE
Thank you.

Big cheers.

CUT TO:

81 INT. KETTLE CAFE / INT. MAGGIE & WYATT'S HOUSE - MORNING 81

The band is having breakfast. Maggie is on a pay phone talking to Jasper at home. Wyatt is changing Shelby's diaper.

MAGGIE

So we played another and another...
and they cheered for each one. I
swear they had to pull us off that
stage, Jasp.

JASPER

You think I could come to Nashville
and watch you sing?

MAGGIE

That's up to your Daddy.

JASPER

Alright, Momma. I love you.

MAGGIE

I love you, too, sweetie. Hey, put
your daddy on for a bit.

Jasper brings Wyatt the cordless phone. He takes it with a
touch of fear.

WYATT

Hello?

MAGGIE

We got a ball game tonight. You got
the time?

WYATT

Yeah... it's at 5 o'clock.
(reads schedule on fridge)
Against the Jellico Plumbers.

MAGGIE

Jellico Plumbers got this buck
toothed pitcher that guns for
Jasper's head every time he's at
bat. You be firm with their coach.
Don't let that kid hurt my boy.

WYATT

I got it.

MAGGIE

(not wanting to hang up)
Well... that's all I got to say.
You got anything to say?

WYATT

(not wanting to hang up)
No.

MAGGIE
Me, neither.

She hangs up the phone and looks at it as if it should talk back.

CUT TO:

82 INT. HOTEL - MAGGIE'S ROOM - NIGHT 82

Maggie is lying on her bed in her hotel room eating a bag of Fritos and watching TV.

She sits up straight and sniffs the air. She smells something.

83 EXT. / INT. HOTEL - GILL AND UNCLE FAYE'S ROOM - NIGHT 83

Maggie knocks on the door. Kell opens it. Woody, Wade, and Uncle Faye are all sitting on the beds. Maggie marches in like a stern mother.

MAGGIE
Y'all are smokin' dope.

Uncle Faye lifts his hand, holding the fat joint.

UNCLE FAYE
It's for my hip.

Woody coughs out the smoke he was holding. The room explodes with lies and laughter as Maggie takes the joint.

WOODY WADE
And I got a bum shoulder... Arthritis. In my wrist.

KELL
I've suffered from depression
since... birth.

A firm knock on the door. Kell opens it, finding a serious looking, bald, black man in a dark suit.

LIMO DRIVER
I'm looking for Maggie Lynn McDodd.

Maggie's eyes widen as she exhales smoke and rushes to the bathroom to flush the joint.

KELL
What'd she do?

LIMO DRIVER

I'm here with a limousine to take her and any guests to the Gaylord Entertainment Center, courtesy of Brandon Gill.

All the men look out the door. A stretch limo awaits.

KELL

No shit. Hey, Maggie, come out with your hands up.

CUT TO:

84 INT. LIMO / EXT. DOWNTOWN NASHVILLE - NIGHT 84

BRANDON GILL'S MUSIC IS HEARD as the band from Jellico takes their first ride in a limo, stoned and laughing.

Uncle Faye pops his head out the sunroof. Kell is working the mini bar. Maggie nurses a Jack and Coke.

85 EXT. GAYLORD ENTERTAINMENT CENTER - NIGHT 85

The limo is waved through the VIP gate. The band exits the limo and is led to the rear entrance.

86 INT. GAYLORD ENTERTAINMENT CENTER - BACK STAGE - NIGHT 86

The band is escorted through the massive loading doors.

87 INT. GAYLORD ENTERTAINMENT CENTER - THE ARENA - NIGHT 87

The doors to the arena open. It's the biggest place they've ever seen under the sky. Thousands are cheering Brandon.

Huge monitors beam with Brandon's handsome grin. The light show is spectacular. Maggie and the band are escorted to a special section down front, near the edge of the stage.

Big pyrotechnics explode showering the stage in sparks. Brandon eyes Maggie as he addresses the crowd.

BRANDON

I know there's a lot of people
think I'm just a pretty face and I
don't know what real Country music
is.

(winks at Maggie)
(MORE)

Well, I don't know about anyone else... but my momma and daddy raised me on Waylon Jennings, Hank Jr., Sr., Willie, George, Charlie and Conway Twitty. And if that ain't real Country, I don't know what is.

Maggie cheers with everyone. Brandon straps on an acoustic.

BRANDON

So I'm gonna sing a favorite of mine and I'm gonna need a little help from a friend. Give a warm welcome to Miss Maggie Lynn.

The crowd applauds as Maggie loses feeling in her legs. Kell is laughing, encouraging her to go up.

KELL

Go on! Get up on the damn stage!

She is helped up on the stage and waves to the crowd, trying to hide her shock.

He's loving this. They hug and talk into each other's ear.

MAGGIE

What are you doing?

BRANDON

Did you know that Cinderella could sing? Cuz she didn't tell me that.
(calling out to his band)
After the Fire is Gone.

Brandon starts singing. Maggie joins in on a modern version of Conway Twitty and Loretta Lynn's After the Fire is Gone.

MAGGIE & BRANDON

*Love is where you find it
When you find no love at home
And there's nothin' cold as ashes
After the fire is gone*

Maggie is nervous, but she rises to the occasion. Her voice is steady and sure. The crowd is loving it.

CUT TO:

88 EXT. GAYLORD ARENA - BACK STAGE DOOR - NIGHT 88

Fans scream. Photographers flash. Maggie and her crew follow Brandon's entourage through security and up into his bus.

89 INT. BRANDON GILL'S BUS - NIGHT 89

The bus is wall to wall with Maggie's band, Brandon's entourage, and a few groupies.

Jeremy looks way out of place in his double-breasted suit. He is talking to Kell, beer in hand, straining to hear.

JEREMY CARTER

I'm Jeremy Carter. I'm Brandon's manager and co-producer of this show we're making with CMT.

KELL

Yeah, so... tell me about that?

JEREMY CARTER

It's a taped concert at the Purple Room. His album should be charting...

KELL

No, I mean about being a manager. How much do you get paid for that?

JEREMY CARTER

Not nearly enough.

90 EXT. MUSIC ROW - NIGHT 90

Brandon's tour bus rumbles down Music Row.

91 INT. BRANDON GILL'S BUS - UP FRONT - NIGHT 91

Brandon gives Maggie a spot next to the BUS DRIVER. He leans against the dash and starts pointing at buildings outside.

BRANDON

When people talk about Music Row, this is what they're talking about.

(points)

There's Sony/BMG. I did my first and second record with them. They got Brad Paisley up in there.

(MORE)

Brooks and BRANDON (continued) Wilson.
(points to another)
Reba's over here at Universal.
(pointing)
Big & Rich is right here at Warner.

MAGGIE
Do they all shop at the same
grocery store?

Maggie smiles letting him know she was joking.

BRANDON
You made it look very easy tonight.
Not everybody can do that.

MAGGIE
You mean gettin' up in front of all
them strangers? There's a moment I
thought I was gonna faint. But
somethin' kicks in when I get to
singin'. Somebody stronger than me
comes out.

BRANDON
Well, I like her, whoever she is.

MAGGIE
I like her, too.

CUT TO:

92 EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

92

The bus is in front of the hotel. The band is waving good
night and heading to their rooms. Maggie hangs back, talking
to Brandon.

BRANDON
I knew I'd get you on this bus one
way or another.

Maggie smiles. There is a definite attraction between the
two.

The doors close. The bus pulls away.

KELL
Hey. We need to have a "come to
Jesus" here.

MAGGIE

We were just talkin', Kell. It's not like I was flirtin' with him.

KELL

(laughs)

Whoa, sis. Yellow flag. I'm not talkin' about him. I'm talkin' about... me being your manager.

(beat)

You steppin' up. Takin' the lead like you done. I gotta say, I'm real impressed. You got a good thing goin' here and I'd like to help you with it.

(a little nervous)

The way it works with management... in terms of compensation... they usually get 10 percent.

MAGGIE

Is that gonna be enough? Maybe you should take half.

KELL

See that's why I'm your manager. To keep you from sayin' dumb shit like that. I take ten.

He waits for an answer. Maggie feels close to Kell.

MAGGIE

Fair enough. We gotta do somethin'?

Kell spits in his hand. Maggie spits in hers. They lock hands and shake.

KELL

That'll do it.

CUT TO:

93

INT. HOTEL - MUSIC MONTAGE - DAY

93

A relentless bluegrass-inspired guitar riff.

The whole band is crammed into one hotel room, practicing. Maggie, Kell and Uncle Faye are all on guitars. Maggie sings with passion.

94 INT. THE PURPLE ROOM - MUSIC MONTAGE - NIGHT 94
Wade and Woody bust in with the rhythm. The club is jumping with people rocking out to Maggie and her band.
Knox watches from above. He is counting money deposits.
The band comes in on the chorus hard and strong. The crowd claps in time with the kick drum.

95 CLOSE UP SHOTS: 95
Kell on the phone. Writing down numbers. Uncle Faye stringing his banjo. Maggie writing down lyrics.

96 EXT. HOTEL - MUSIC MONTAGE - NIGHT 96
Loading up the RV with their gear and taking off.

97 EXT. BROADWAY - MUSIC MONTAGE - DAY 97
The band sings the second verse in an outdoor street concert. A circle of tourists surround them, clapping along. Uncle Faye collects dollars in his hat.

98 EXT. MAGGIE AND WYATT'S HOME - MUSIC MONTAGE - MORNING 98
Wyatt finishes up strapping Shelby into her car seat. He is taking Jasper to school in the station wagon.
As they drive away, the DIRT TRACK RACER is revealed in the garage, half-way covered by a tarp. Neglected.

99 EXT. PRINTER'S ALLEY - MUSIC MONTAGE - DAY 99
Each member of the band has struck a pose in front of the RV against the backdrop of Printer's Alley.
Kell has a digital camera on a tripod, trying to take their picture. He sets the timer and rushes over into the photo, accidentally bumping Uncle Faye.
Faye gives Kell a wet willy (licks his finger and puts it in Kell's ear) messing up the shot. Laughter.

100 INT. LAUNDROMAT - MUSIC MONTAGE - NIGHT 100

Maggie sits on a lonely bench as her clothes tumble in the dryer. She is strumming her guitar with surprising rhythm.

101 INT. PURPLE ROOM - MUSIC MONTAGE - NIGHT 101

Wade pounds on his drums bringing the band back from the solo strumming. Maggie sings again, returning to the chorus.

102 INT. RV - AT THE HOTEL - MUSIC MONTAGE - NIGHT 102

Maggie is playing her guitar working on a song. Kell is taking the photo of them on Printer's Alley and pasting it into a flyer to be copied and put up around town:

Maggie Lynn and Family.

103 INT. WIPI RADIO - END OF MONTAGE - DAY 103

The band is crammed into a modest studio finishing up the song.

CUT TO:

104 INT. WIPI - THE WAITING ROOM - LATER 104

Kell and the band raid the snacks and plop down on the couches. They can hear the broadcast from speakers above.

105 INT. WIPI - SAM DUNN'S STUDIO - CONTINUOUS 105

SAM DUNN (60's) chews on an unlit cigar as he sits at his station. He's got country charm and a slow drawl.

BOOMER (28), his counterpart, is a mile a minute. Younger and more brash. He believes in hair products and tanning booths.

The ENGINEER cues them: ON AIR.

RADIO INTRO

*You're listening to the Sam and
Boomer Zoo on radio's number one
station for Country music. THE
SPURRRRRRR!*

SAM DUNN

I'm here with Maggie Lynn McDodd
who's playing the Purple Room over
on Broadway. Welcome, Maggie.

MAGGIE

Thank you, Sam. It's great to be
here.

SAM DUNN

Now, Maggie, just cuz you're a girl
don't mean I'm not gonna tell you
what I tell everybody. You gotta
watch your swearin' on this show,
they fine us up the you know
what...

MAGGIE

Yes sir...

SAM DUNN

I bring that up cuz I've seen your
show and yer tearin' it up, girl. I
mean you get downright rowdy.

MAGGIE

Well... when you work your whole
week, changing diapers and packing
lunches... if you get a chance to
go out on the town with your
girlfriends, even for one night...
I tell you what, you wanna get
rowdy.

SAM DUNN

(laughs)

So it's not an act. It's for real.

MAGGIE

No sir...

BOOMER

Oh, this girl's for real, alright.
She's not like those cream puffs.
No, this girl's a real redneck...

The word stings Maggie: *redneck*?

Sam slaps a RED BUTTON on his panel, triggering a sound
effect of two girls in a cat fight: *Ah! Slap! AHHHH!* Maggie
is startled by it.

MAGGIE

I don't know... I wouldn't call
myself...

Boomer interrupts aggressively. Maggie gets uncomfortable.

BOOMER

Let me tell you what I did. I typed
in your name, online, just to get a
little info, and let me tell you
what I found. It's video link of a
local news show. Says here...

(reads his screen)

"Maggie Lynn McDodd beats up
weather girl."

106 INT. WIPI - THE WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

106

Kell leaps to his feet and marches toward the studio.

KELL

That son-of-a-bitch!

107 INT. WIPI - SAM DUNN'S STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

107

Boomer turns his screen toward Maggie. She watches low res
footage of herself punching Sally Price.

SAM DUNN

OH!

BOOMER

So your husband was runnin' around
on you with this home-wrecker. You
call her out on the air. Live. And
POW! You snap her head back.

Sam hits his button. End of a boxing round: *DING! DING!*
Maggie feels ambushed and stunned. All her confidence fades.

BOOMER

Now Maggie, I gotta ask... of all
the women in Country Music, both
living and dead, from Dolly Parton
to Patsy Cline... who could you
beat in a fight? With that punch I
bet you could take on ALL the Dixie
Chicks at once.

Maggie looks up in the silent control booth, seeing her brother motioning her to get off the mic. Sam realizes the bit went too far. He moves on.

SAM DUNN

Well, uh, Maggie Lynn can be seen this weekend, opening up for...

MAGGIE

(interrupts)

Since you brung it up, I might as well say what I got to say on that.

(grips the mic, confident)

We're country... We fight hard. But we love hard. I'm sure Dolly Parton knows what I'm talkin' about. Tanya Tucker knows what I'm talkin' about. We try to be good but sometimes we end up raisin' some hell.

(she's in control)

So, this weekend, if you wanna watch a cat fight, go on and stay at home and download me with the rest of the pervs.

(Boomer stiffens)

Or you could hightail it to the Purple Room and help this redneck...

(glares at Boomer)

... put the cunt back in country.

Maggie slaps Sam's panel: BOYOVING! Kell cackles with laughter behind the glass.

CUT TO:

108

INT. ERNEST TUBB RECORD STORE - DAY

108

Maggie pins a *MAGGIE LYNN and Family* flyer to the wall. We PULL BACK to see it's one of hundreds.

KELL

I got somethin' to show you. But don't laugh.

She follows him to the other side of the store. Numerous black and white headshots of unknown country singers are taped to the wall.

Maggie gasps. There is Kell with full mullet and leather jacket. He is ten years younger, standing with his guitar.

MAGGIE

Oh, my God! When did you get this
made? Does Momma know?

KELL

Nobody back home knows. And I wanna
keep it that way. Look at my hair.

MAGGIE

Aren't you proud? I know things
didn't turn out the way you wanted.
But look at that guy. Good for
him... and his mullet.

109

EXT. ERNEST TUBB RECORD STORE - SUNSET

109

Maggie and Kell walk out of the store holding a stack of
flyers.

VROOOOM! A gray Corvette convertible glides up to the
sidewalk. Brandon is inside.

BRANDON

Hey, it's the kids from Jericho.

KELL

That's Jellico. Nice car.

BRANDON

What's goin' on?

Maggie plants a boot on Brandon's car door.

MAGGIE

Bought some new boots. My little
piggies are hurtin' but I gotta
break 'em in.

BRANDON

You know the best way to do that?
Hop in. I'll show you.

Maggie turns to Kell.

KELL

Go'on. I'm waitin' on Shania Twain
to roll up in a Mustang.

She speeds off with Brandon. Kell watches from the curb,
worrying like a big brother should.

CUT TO:

110

INT. NASHVILLE NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

110

It is a huge DANCE CLUB where the line dancing goes on forever. The music is a mixture of Country and Hip Hop.

Brandon and Maggie take to the floor under the ever present eyes of BUCK, THE BODYGUARD.

MAGGIE

This is what you call a "hold my purse" song. Kind'a song that makes girls go "baby, hold my purse. I gotta dance."

BRANDON

You want me to hold yours?

MAGGIE

Didn't bring one. No excuses. You gotta dance.

There are a few reactions to Brandon Gill as they join the massive line dance.

Maggie looks great. She feels alive and confident with her knowledge of the dance steps.

111

INT. NASHVILLE NIGHT CLUB - THE BAR - NIGHT

111

A few giggly girls approach the bar but are stopped by Buck.

Brandon and Maggie sit at the bar. They're both feeling a good buzz. Their knees are touching, almost intertwined.

BRANDON

The weather girl?

MAGGIE

Yeah. Or... what are they really called...?

BRANDON

Um... uh.... meteorologists.

MAGGIE

That's it. My husband was screwin' a meteorologist.

(Brandon laughs)

And that's funny? It's sad. It's downright sad.

BRANDON

So you gonna leave him?

MAGGIE

I need to go back and get my kids,
is what I need to do. They could be
runnin' around in the street hungry
and naked right now, for all I
know. Lucky I got my momma keepin'
an eye on things.

BRANDON

You didn't answer my question.

MAGGIE

What was your question?

BRANDON

I asked if you were gonna...

MAGGIE

(interrupting)

Leave him? I don't know.

Maggie pushes her beer aside and signals the bartender.

MAGGIE

I'd like a shot of Jim Beam.
(he sets her up)
Let me tell you somethin' about my
daddy. We called him B.Daddy...

Brandon smiles watching Maggie light up with memory.

MAGGIE

He was a long haul trucker. Then he
ran a bar. And he was a hell
raiser, for sure. Loved to go out
honky-tonkin' with my momma. Loved
to drink. Loved to get in fights.
Loved to sing... out loud. And he
loved pickin' that guitar.

(remembers)

And he loved me.

(beat)

So when I grew up, what did I do? I
married someone just like him. My
husband was this wild boy. And
nobody could get close to him. But
I did. I did...

She thinks back on those days. She shakes it off.

MAGGIE
(with power and
excitement)

But bein' up on that stage, and
singin' them songs, and workin'
that crowd like I's wranglin' a
herd! It's got me thinkin'...

(a fire in her eye)

I shouldn't have married somebody
like B.Daddy. Cuz I am B.Daddy.

Brandon can see the determination in her eyes. He's
completely falling for this woman.

He lifts his drink.

BRANDON
Well... to B.Daddy.

MAGGIE
(lifts her drink)
To B.Daddy.

They clink glasses and kill their drinks.

CUT TO:

112 EXT. NASHVILLE CLUB - NIGHT

112

The valet zips up to the front of the club in Brandon's
Corvette. Maggie pushes Brandon out of the way and climbs in
the driver's seat.

BRANDON
No. Come on. I drive the car.

MAGGIE
You'd tell a girl who's never
driven a Corvette, that she can't?
Be nice and get in.

Brandon reluctantly gets in the passenger side.

BRANDON
I don't like to be driven.

MAGGIE
I can see that.

She releases the clutch and floors the gas.

113

EXT. DOWNTOWN NASHVILLE - NIGHT

113

The Corvette zips through traffic. She's a natural racer. Brandon looks ill. He grips the dash.

MAGGIE

(looking in the rearview)
Is that guy following us?

BRANDON

Who, Buck? It's his job.

MAGGIE

I bet I could shake him.

Maggie takes a sharp corner, careening through the intersection. Buck is caught in traffic.

Maggie takes another sharp turn and floors it. She has a straight shot with open air.

BRANDON

Whoa! Okay, slow down!

MAGGIE

How much you open her up?

BRANDON

Not this fast.

Deep in the distance, red and blue lights spin. Maggie and Brandon turn to see an approaching police car.

MAGGIE

Um... Brandon. I'm a little buzzed.

BRANDON

Yeah, and I'm a little famous. So we're a little fucked.

MAGGIE

Hang on.

BRANDON

Wait, wait, WAIT!

Maggie takes a corner in the warehouse district of downtown, clear of traffic.

BRANDON

Jesus Christ!

She yanks hard on the steering, taking corners with confidence.

MAGGIE

She's loose. You need to take half a pound outta your back tires, if you wanna take these corners.

BRANDON

I'll radio the pit crew.

She sees an empty, underground parking lot and guns for it. The Corvette slides across the dark street and bounces down the ramp into the underground lot.

The car spins and stops. Maggie kills the lights. They wait in darkness as the sound of a siren grows louder.

The POLICE CAR passes before the entrance and fades away. Brandon exhales and slumps into his seat.

MAGGIE

Man up, Brandon. Ya act like you've never run from the law before.

Brandon looks at her like she's crazy.

114 INT. BRANDON GILL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

114

Brandon opens the door and punches in his alarm code.

The house looks like something out of a magazine. Vaulted oak ceilings, black iron bolts, and old stone.

Maggie strolls behind Brandon. He picks up a REMOTE, turning on various lights, revealing different features of his mansion.

BRANDON

My friends warned me against gettin' into real estate. And they were right. It's like golf or gambling. I just got obsessed.

(the remote triggers a fountain)

I buy older homes. Nothin' too fancy or expensive... put a little money into renovations and... well, I wish it was as easy as sayin' "presto" but...

(clicks the remote)

There's my pool.

The pool lights up. Maggie gives Brandon a hard time.
Pretending not to be impressed.

MAGGIE

That's some remote you got.

115 INT. BRANDON GILL'S HOUSE - RECORDING STUDIO

115

Lights blink ON revealing his own studio with plush couches everywhere.

MAGGIE

You got your own studio?

BRANDON

I come down here at night. Lay down
some temp tracks. Record my own
songs.

(an thought)

Hey... listen to this.

He fires up his PRO-TOOLS set up and cues up a country music instrumental. It is a simple guitar with piano. A sad tune.

BRANDON

This girl's been taking up most of
my time. The sad and slow ones are
always the hardest for me. That's
me on guitar and piano.

MAGGIE

You gonna put some words to it?

BRANDON

I got some ideas. Or I might sell
it to someone else. You know, a
song is like real estate. You think
of the money made from publishing
over the years...

(embarrassed)

I'm runnin' at the mouth. That
liquor gets me loquacious.

MAGGIE

Loq-what?

BRANDON

Means talkative.

MAGGIE

You don't need to use big words
around me.

BRANDON

(grins)

Well... I'm just trying to put the
dick back in dictionary.

MAGGIE

(laughs)

You heard me on the radio?

BRANDON

Shit... who didn't.

116 INT. BRANDON GILL'S HOUSE - HALLWAY

116

Maggie moves into a narrow hallway. Both sides are lined with platinum and gold records, various pictures, album covers, and magazine covers.

MAGGIE

(marveling)

Gul-dag, Brandon! You got you all
over.

BRANDON

Some of my records. Some of my
awards...

(motions down the hall)

Down there's my... you know?

MAGGIE

You know... what?

BRANDON

The bedroom.

Maggie starts laughing. She walks down the hall looking at
all the framed awards.

MAGGIE

It's the Brandon Gill Sprint Track.
A straight shoot to the finish line.
Do girls get a trophy at the end?

Brandon closes the door to his bedroom. Not wanting her to go
inside. He loves that she's calling out all his tricks.

BRANDON

You think you got me all figured
out.

MAGGIE

I got some ideas.

(smiles)

What about me? You got me figured?

BRANDON

You been on my mind since I first
saw you with dirt on your face.

Maggie playfully fingers a gold record on the wall. She's in the mood and Brandon knows it.

MAGGIE

Well, I'm all cleaned up now. Hope
I'm not a disappointment...

Brandon leans in and kisses her. And it's hot. She hasn't been kissed in a long time and it feels good.

Brandon tastes her neck and lifts her up against the wall, causing a platinum record to fall and shatter. They talk between gasps and kisses.

MAGGIE

I broke one of your records.

BRANDON

I'll make another.

Maggie pushes him back with her hand. They catch their breath.

MAGGIE

You... are... good... lookin'.

(a deep breath)

But... I'll ask you to take me home
now.

BRANDON

Back to the dirt track? Back to
goin' round and round?

Maggie doesn't back down. She straightens herself up and kicks the platinum record at her feet.

MAGGIE

Lots of things go round and round.

She moves away, down the hall, with a confident swagger. Brandon's shakes his head, impressed.

CUT TO:

117 EXT. HOTEL - LATE NIGHT

117

The rumble of Brandon's Corvette sounds as he drops Maggie off at the hotel. Maggie gives Brandon one final look and then he's off.

118 INT. HOTEL - MAGGIE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

118

Maggie is startled to see Kell sitting on the edge of her bed with his guitar.

MAGGIE

Hey... what are you doing...?

KELL

You're a grown woman, Mag. And I'm in no place to judge. But I been here before. I know we're here to have some fun... but with a talent like you got and your pretty looks... the vultures are gonna start circlin'.

MAGGIE

He's not a vulture.

The tension is palpable.

KELL

Well... I wouldn't know.

Kell leaves in silence. He's been up all night. Maggie is left alone in her room.

FADE TO BLACK:

119 EXT. MAGGIE AND WYATT'S HOME - LATE DAY

119

WHACK! Jasper and Wyatt are silently playing catch. Shelby chews on an extra mitt in the grass.

Keough rolls up in his truck and steps out dressed in a suit.

WYATT

You gotta a date or a funeral?

KEOUGH

Funeral. But the night's still young. My Uncle Harry died.

Wyatt stops playing and gives Keough his attention.

WYATT

Damn, Keough. I didn't know. Sorry for your loss.

KEOUGH

Not me. He's a bit of a prick. Or was. Probably still is...

(kicks the dirt, shouts)

You hear that, Harry? You's a prick! But... he did leave me 20 grand. So... he's square with me.

Jasper and Wyatt start playing catch again.

JASPER

You wanna come to the game with us tonight?

KEOUGH

I don't know... I think I gotta start plannin' my vacation.

JASPER

You goin' to Disneyworld?

KEOUGH

Naw sir. I'm thinkin' about headin' up to Ohio. There's this race called the El Dora 100.

WHACK! Wyatt catches the ball and stares at Keough. Jasper can't help but smile. It's the Super Bowl of dirt racing.

KEOUGH

We got a chance, Wyatt. You and I both know it.

WYATT

It's only four weeks away.

KEOUGH

Oh it's worse than that. I don't think we can use our car. She's great on the heat and taking corners but I wouldn't trust her over ten laps. I think we need to bust out the Old Bird.

WYATT

She's too loose. Her ass is all over the place.

KEOUGH

You'd be loose. But you'd be out front.

JASPER

He's right, Daddy. Remember the Camden Speedway?

KEOUGH

There you go! Remember the Camden Speedway? How was your view back there in the tenth row?

120 EXT. MAGGIE AND WYATT'S HOME - BACK OF THE SHOP - LATER 120

GREEEEEET. They open up an old, dusty shed. Wyatt holds Shelby on his hip as Keough and Jasper yank a paint spattered drop cloth off an orange late model DIRT RACER. This is OLD BIRD.

WYATT

Swap her engine out?

KEOUGH

We're not gonna know what to fix till we test her out. I say we race her this weekend at the Dirt Ring, and find her sweet spot.

Wyatt sighs, knowing the work it would take.

KEOUGH

It's my money, Wyatt. If we're gonna do it. Let's do it to win. You and me pulled all-nighters before.

WYATT

Well... I can't tonight. We got a ball game. Already late.

(giving up)

This may not be the best time, Keough.

JASPER

Daddy, are you serious? It's the El Dora 100. I think we need to bust into this Old Bird right now.

Jasper takes Shelby and starts walking up to the house.

JASPER

You like beef stroganoff, Keough?

KEOUGH

Yes'sir.

JASPER

I'm gonna make dinner. Be up at the house in 40 minutes.

WYATT

Hey, Jasp?

The two share a look that bonds them closer than ever before.

JASPER

We're gonna win it, Daddy.

Wyatt watches his son walk up in the house. His pride swells.

CUT TO:

121 EXT. BROADWAY - NIGHT

121

The street is packed with activity. A line has formed outside the Purple Room. The marquee reads: Maggie Lynn and Family.

122 INT. THE PURPLE ROOM - BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

122

Maggie and Kell are off in the corner going over the verse of the newest song, Ya Got Me Pissed Off.

Wade is setting up the drums as the mics are being tested. The band is anxious. The crowd is getting bigger.

KELL

Damn. If that ain't a big crowd.

UNCLE FAYE

Makes ya wish we had a cut of the door.

KELL

We'll get there.

Maggie slings her electric guitar onto her back and picks up the receiver to the backstage pay phone.

123 INT. MAGGIE AND WYATT'S HOME - KITCHEN/PURPLE ROOM - 123
LATE DAY

Shelby has dropped her pacifier and is getting fussy up in her high chair. Jasper stirs the boiling noodles on the stove when the phone rings.

JASPER
(answers)
McDodd residence.

MAGGIE
Who won?

JASPER
(tries to lie)
Hey, Momma. The... game got canceled.

MAGGIE
Is it rainin' there?

JASPER
Naw... but...

Shelby lets out a big cry. Maggie flinches. Jasper rushes over to pick up her pacifier - but it's too late. Shelby's crying.

MAGGIE
What's wrong with my baby?

JASPER
Nothin'... she's just waitin' on dinner and gettin' fussy...

Jasper sees the noodles boiling over on the stove. The poor kid is juggling too much.

JASPER
Momma... I'm gonna have to call you back...

MAGGIE
Jasp, I'm about to go on stage. You can't... put your Daddy on the...

Jasper hangs up. Maggie is left holding the receiver of the backstage pay phone. A look of grave concern.

Knox pops backstage. He looks overwhelmed.

KNOX

Titans game just let out. So we are
wall to wall and rowdy. Hope you
all brought your A game.

Kell looks out in the crowd. It's slammed. The band is
genuinely amped. Uncle Faye turns to Woody.

UNCLE FAYE

Look at all them girls. I swear, if
I's your age, and played in a band,
I'd get more tail than a toilet seat.

Despite the band's enthusiasm, Maggie's mind is elsewhere.
She picks up the receiver and starts dialing.

KELL

Maggie, we're on.

124 INTERCUT - BACK TO THE HOUSE

124

Jasper has the kitchen under control. He bounces Shelby on
his hip trying to calm her down.

The phone rings.

JASPER

McDodd residence.

MAGGIE

Where's your Daddy?

JASPER

Um... he's takin' a bath.

VROOOOM! Keough and Wyatt are revving the engine out in the
shop. Maggie heard that, loud and clear. Her anger grows.

MAGGIE

Jasper McDodd, you're fibbin' to me.

JASPER

Yes ma'am.

MAGGIE

You didn't go to your ball game,
did ya?

JASPER

No, ma'am. But...

MAGGIE

You go out to the shop and put your daddy on the phone right now!

Kell and the rest of the band wait and listen, watching Maggie fume. The crowd starts getting louder and louder.

125 EXT. MAGGIE AND WYATT'S HOME - THE SHOP/THE PURPLE ROOM - 125 NIGHT

Keough and Wyatt are already covered in grease. The engine roar is defining. They shout into each others ears to talk.

Jasper looks grave as he walks into the shop with the cordless phone and Shelby in his arms.

Wyatt cuts the engine and smiles.

WYATT

Supper on, son?

JASPER

(holds out the phone)

Momma wants to talk to you.

The blood drains out of Wyatt's cheeks. He takes the phone.

WYATT

Hey, Mag.

MAGGIE

(seething with anger)

I can see how you been selfish with me, Wyatt. But God forgive you for bein' selfish with our kids...

WYATT

Wait...

MAGGIE

This whole family's spent their lives keepin' you on the lead lap. Every weekend, every goddamn day! And you can't even get your son to a ball game on time! If you're in the shop, who's watchin' my baby? Answer me that? You got Jasper watchin' her, huh?

WYATT

Maggie, if you could let me explain...

MAGGIE

You can explain it to my face. I'm comin' home! I'm comin' home right now to get my kids. And you're never gonna see them again! NEVER!

Maggie slams the phone down and marches off toward the back door. She shouts at her band.

MAGGIE

Pack up the RV. We're leavin'.

KELL

Maggie, we got a full house.

MAGGIE

I SAID WE'RE LEAVIN'!

Slams the door.

126 EXT. THE PURPLE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

126

Maggie paces back and forth and kicks at the gravel out back by the parked RV.

She stares at the back door waiting for Kell and the band to follow. Nothing.

127 INT. THE PURPLE ROOM - BACKSTAGE/ WANDA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Maggie bursts back into the backstage, filled with rage.

MAGGIE

Did ya all hear what I just said?

Kell is standing by the pay phone. He holds out the receiver to Maggie. She snatches it away and shouts into the phone.

MAGGIE

Who the hell is this?

WANDA

This is your mother talkin'. Now you listen to me. I'm goin' over to your house and I'm pickin up the kids.

MAGGIE

Uh-uh! I'm comin' home, Momma. I'm gonna drive all night if I got to. But that selfish son-of-a-bitch....

WANDA

No you're not. You're gonna stay
right where you are.

MAGGIE

(getting really mad)

Since when do you and Kell gang up
on me? When the hell did that
start?

WANDA

Maggie Lynn!

Her words carry maternal strength. Maggie starts sobbing like a child, clutching the phone.

WANDA

(firm and loving)

I let you down, darlin'. And your
Daddy let you down, too. We could'a
pushed you harder with your
singin', just like we did Kell. But
we didn't. Even with you married.
Even with them babies. We could'a
made it work...

MAGGIE

(sobbing)

I'm a bad mother...

WANDA

Now you stop that...

MAGGIE

Momma, I shouldn't be here. I... I
need to be at home with my...

WANDA

Maggie, I'm doin' the talkin' right
now. Are you listenin' to me?

MAGGIE

Yes, ma'am...

WANDA

You wipe them tears. You fix up
your face. And you get your ass up
on that stage.

Maggie wipes away her tears with the back of her fist. The crowd is getting restless. They begin clapping in rhythm.

MAGGIE

Yes, ma'am.

WANDA

I love you, darlin'.

MAGGIE

I love you, too.

Maggie hangs up the phone but is unable to let go of the receiver. A fire begins to burn. She picks up the receiver and slams it back down.

BAM! And again. BAM!

Uncle Faye and Kell exchange concerned looks. Maggie starts slamming down the phone in rhythm with the clapping crowd.

A DRUM BEAT kicks in. Maggie hits harder and harder. BAM! BAM! BAM! BAM!

CUT TO:

128 INT. THE PURPLE ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

128

The BEAT SWELLS. Maggie and the band play an energetic bridge into a boot-stompin' song called, Ya Got Me Pissed Off.

The joint is slammed, wall to wall. Knox is happy. Waitresses hold beer trays high above their heads.

MAGGIE

Alright! Stop the damn music. I got somethin' to say.

The band crashes to a stop. Cheers. Maggie paces the stage with attitude in her step, a little reckless.

The band accents her rant, punctuating her words.

MAGGIE

What does a country girl gotta do to get a shot a whiskey?

A plastic cup is handed to Maggie from the crowd. Kell looks a little concerned at her on-stage anger, but the audience is eating it up. Maggie is in the zone. Unstoppable.

MAGGIE

(scans the crowd, holding her shot)

Ladies I'm not gonna lie.

(MORE)

There's some ~~MAGGIE~~ (good cookin'), corn-fed cowboys up in this joint. But y'all be careful. Cuz the first mistake we make... is lovin' em.

(she's working the crowd)

And we put up with a whole lot, cuz we love 'em so damn much. Like the mood swings. And the five minute quickies before work, and the oil stains on the sheets, and the shit stains on the drawers, and the cookin' and the cleanin'. And for what? For y'all to run off and screw some run-around, bar tart, tramp behind our back? Hell naw!

(takes the shot)

Not gonna cry no more. I'm gonna get...

She signals the band to come in. They rock the song to a close. It is electric, alive. The crowd is cheering.

THE BAND

(singing)

PISSED OFF!

The song concludes with a powerful drum solo. BAM!

CUT TO:

129

INT. MAGGIE AND WYATT'S HOME - LATE NIGHT

129

The door opens. It's Mommy Wanda. Jasper is standing next to Wyatt. He looks sick with sorrow as he holds Shelby, asleep on his shoulder.

WANDA

Come on, Jasp.

JASPER

I wanna stay with Daddy.

WYATT

Go on, son. I'll see you in the mornin'. Go get in the car now.

Wyatt hands Shelby over to Wanda. Jasper bows his head and crosses to the car leaving Wanda alone with Wyatt.

Wanda keeps her voice even and soft.

WANDA

Do you remember all that parking lot drama you used to stir up? Thunderin' around in that souped-up Mustang you had. Ain't no one crazy enough to get in that car with you, except Maggie. She was fearless... and fierce. She had to be to love you.

(Wyatt remembers)

Then you took that girl and you turned her into a momma. Then you married her and turned her into your momma.

(steps closer)

Well, Wyatt... that fearless girl came back. And she's sick of your shit. And she's out there with a bunch of boys that are prettier than you.

You can see it in his face. He's never thought about completely losing her until now.

WANDA

You better get back in that parking lot, Wyatt. Or she's gonna be gone.

Wanda walks away leaving Wyatt to ponder her words.

CUT TO:

130 EXT. THE PURPLE ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

130

CLOSE UP - Maggie Lynn signs a Purple Room beer coaster for a group of middle-aged women on vacation.

The whole band is outside, socializing with the remaining crowd outside the club on Broadway.

FAN

Do you have any records or CDs we could buy?

KELL

Not yet. But soon, darlin'.

FAN

Me and my friends come here every Saturday night and I swear you're our favorite.

MAGGIE

Well, bless your heart.

Maggie waves and starts walking down Broadway. Kell follows.

KELL

A friend of mine is the engineer
over at RCA Studio B. Said he'd
give us a deal if we wanted to lay
down a few songs.

MAGGIE

(mad at Kell)

Talk to my manager. But be careful.
He can be a real asshole. Or maybe
just 10% asshole.

Kell stops walking, grabs Maggie's arm to stop her.

KELL

Where you goin'?

MAGGIE

Why? You gonna tattle on me again?

Maggie violently yanks her arm free and marches off. Uncle Faye comes up behind Kell, watching her leave.

CUT TO:

131 EXT. BRANDON GILL'S HOUSE - FRONT GATE - NIGHT 131

Maggie pushes the button on the security box outside the tall iron gate.

Static barks back. Brandon answers on the other end.

BRANDON

Yo...

MAGGIE

Hey. It's... it's Maggie.

(silence)

I don't know if you're alone or
even if you wanna see me...

KA-CHUNNN... the iron gate opens.

132

INT. BRANDON GILL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

132

A tea kettle whistles. Brandon makes Maggie a cup of tea, placing it on a tray with milk and sugar.

She is seated in a huge, comfortable couch. Her shoes are off. Her thoughts are in a tangle.

Brandon places the tea tray down, wraps a cotton cloth around the hot cup and hands it to her.

He sits on the table before her as she sips.

MAGGIE

(a deep breath)

You've probably known your whole life that you wanted to be a country music star. Well, I haven't. Wasn't even an option in my mind. I dreamt about gettin' married... and making babies and growin' old in a big ole house filled with family. And that was gonna be more than enough.

(struggles)

But it's not enough. Not anymore.

Brandon wipes away one of her tears.

BRANDON

Welcome to the show, Maggie. We hurt. That's our job. We put it in a song. And somewhere, someone just as sad as us... listens. And they know they're not alone.

Brandon leans close to her. She gently resists, placing a hand on his chest.

MAGGIE

Brandon... I don't...

Brandon wasn't leaning in for a kiss. He was reaching for his guitar behind her. He gently puts it in her hands.

133

INT. BRANDON GILL'S HOUSE - THE STUDIO - MONTAGE - NIGHT 133

Music is heard. A soft sad tune. The same sad guitar riff that Brandon played for her before.

He sits at the controls in his studio as Maggie writes lyrics on a sheet of paper. She's ready to let go.

Headsets over the ears. Mouth to the microphone.

Her voice is soft, filled with heart ache. She sings about saying goodbye to a man and how the love she left behind was true and unforgettable.

Maggie opens her eyes at the conclusion of the first verse and makes eye contact with Brandon as he gently adjusts the levels.

Maggie sings in the recording studio as we FADE TO:

134 EXT. HOTEL - RV - MONTAGE - NIGHT

134

Kell climbs to the top of RV and looks at the Nashville Skyline. He waits.

135 EXT. MAGGIE AND WYATT'S HOME - THE SHOP - MONTAGE - NIGHT 135

Wyatt stands before his car, lost in thought. He rubs the oil off his hands. He notices his wedding band - scuffed and dented.

He is alone. He misses his family. He misses his wife.

136 INT. BRANDON GILL'S HOUSE - THE STUDIO - MONTAGE - NIGHT 136

Brandon and Maggie are both wearing headphones, listening to the song. They sit on stools, their knees intertwined.

The two can't stop looking at each other.

Brandon touches her face. The tenderness feels good. She reaches out and slowly pulls Brandon in. It is a long and passionate kiss.

FADE TO BLACK.

137 INT. BRANDON GILL'S HOUSE - MORNING 137

MAGGIE LYNN wakes up in a king-sized bed, naked under the sheet.

She turns towards the other side of the bed - it's not empty like it was at home. Instead, Brandon sleeps next to her.

Her guilt hits hard. She quietly dresses.

138 INT. BRANDON GILL'S HOUSE - MORNING

138

Holding her boots in her grip, she makes her way to the front door. With one yank on the door knob the alarm goes off: BYOW-YOW-YOW-YOW!

MAGGIE
(startled)
Shit...

She punches at the key pad, trying anything she can.

BRANDON
Whoa! Where you goin'?

Brandon comes rushing out to her aid wearing nothing but blue jeans. He quickly punches in the code, silencing the alarm.

BRANDON
Maggie, what's wrong?

MAGGIE
I gotta go. I really gotta go.

BRANDON
Let me get dressed, I'll take you...

MAGGIE
No! I don't want... I'm gonna get back on my own.

BRANDON
Am I gonna see you again?

Maggie struggles to answer.

Brandon gently touches her face. He kisses her. Her guilt and worry fade. The kiss feels good.

She drops her boots and wraps her arms around him. Brandon shuts the door.

CUT TO:

139 EXT. THE DIRT RING - DAY

139

It's a DAY RACE today. Wanda bounces Shelby in her lap. Sally Price looks bored, waiting to catch footage of the winner.

Jasper is down in PIT ALLEY helping Keough fuel up the Dirt Racer. The race is about to START.

Wyatt looks distracted as he puts on his gloves. Big Boy and Peggy are getting in their cars.

BIG BOY

Hey Wyatt! If you win this one is
your weather girl gonna put you on
TV?

PEGGY

You wanna be an asshole, do it
outta earshot of his kid.

Big sees Jasper. He huffs and climbs in his car. Keough taps Wyatt on the back.

KEOOGH

Remember. We don't gotta win this.
Just tell me what she's missin'.

Wyatt climbs in his car. He reaches for his SAFETY BELT and freezes.

A recurring memory hits him: a smiling MAGGIE buckles him in and kisses him, over and over, through out their young life.

The gate opens. The crowd cheers as all the cars rumble onto the track.

The dust cloud clears revealing Wyatt's car, motionless. He just can't go around that track again.

He climbs out and walks right up to Keough and hands him his helmet.

WYATT

I know what she's missing.

Wyatt then kneels next to Jasper.

WYATT

What do you say you and me go on a
little trip.

Jasper smiles.

CUT TO:

140 EXT. BRANDON GILL'S HOUSE - POOL / DRIVEWAY - DAY 140

Brandon has thrown a POOL PARTY. His house is packed with suited industry types, gorgeous women, and a few Country stars.

Woody jumps off the diving board and shouts.

WOODY
CANNON BALL!

Uncle Faye has taken off his shoes and socks, dipping his feet in Brandon's pool. Wade is sunning himself, shirtless and white. The crew from Jellico look a little out of place.

Kell searches for a beer in the outdoor bar.

KELL
With all this guy's money, he can't
keep a Bud or a Coors around?

Kell emerges from the bar with a Heineken. He cracks the lid off and goes inside Brandon's house.

141 INT. BRANDON GILL'S HOUSE - RECORDING STUDIO - DAY 141

Kell peeks through a door to see Brandon in his own studio, sitting at the CONTROL BOARD. Maggie is seated on a stool in the RECORDING AREA behind the glass.

BRANDON
New song I'm workin' on. She's
putting some harmony over it.

KELL
You payin' her for that?

BRANDON
We're just messin' around.

Kell enters the recording area. Maggie looks playful and sexy. She's got a Nashville flair to her today. Rock and roll brawn with denim and diamonds.

KELL
I talked to the people across the
street at Crossroads. We can take
the nine o'clock slot.

MAGGIE
You wanna play tonight?

KELL

We been playing every weekend. Why wouldn't we play this one?

MAGGIE

Cuz they're taping Brandon's TV special. And tonight Brandon's got the release party at the Country Music Hall of Fame. We should go.

Kell grabs the mic and speaks into it with a firm voice. Brandon flinches, listening through the headphones.

KELL

Give us a sec, would you?

(Brandon leaves)

So... you don't wanna play tonight... cuz you gotta party to go to?

MAGGIE

Bein' that I haven't had a vacation in the past ten years. I thought we could have a little fun, too.

KELL

And is that what we're havin' right here? Are we havin' fun?

(Maggie doesn't answer)

What are you doin' here, Mag? Why are you into this asshole?

MAGGIE

So he's an asshole now? Why, cuz he's got money?

KELL

Cuz he's movin' in on my sister. That's one thing.

MAGGIE

You mean, movin' in on Wyatt's wife. You boys stick together, huh?

KELL

I get you away from home so you can get your head right and focus on your own music. On your own voice. ON YOUR OWN LIFE! And what do you do? You draft in behind another man. Better watch it, Mag. Knowing your history, you'll be pregnant by sundown.

Maggie slaps Kell. It's a loud one.

MAGGIE

You know what I was doin' when you were out here honky-tonkin'? I was taking care of Daddy when he was sick. When he couldn't even clean himself. And when I wasn't carin' for Daddy I was carin' for my kids. And when I was doin' all that, what was my husband doin'? He's out boot-knockin' with that blond heifer on the news. So Kell, I'm sorry if I disappoint both y'all. But I'll tell you true, I don't give a shit!

KELL

Since you got this all covered,
I'll just GO ON BACK HOME!

MAGGIE

WHY DON'T YOU GO TO HELL FIRST!!

Kell storms outside.

142

EXT. BRANDON GILL'S HOUSE - POOL / DRIVEWAY - DAY

142

Kell marches past the pool, beer in hand.

KELL

Daddy always said, don't trust a man who drinks beer out of green bottle.

He takes the bottle and hurls it to the other side of the pool. It shatters. CRASH!

Most of the party chatter has stopped. All eyes on Kell losing his cool.

KELL

Come on, Clampetts. We're movin'
outta Beverly.

UNCLE FAYE

I just got my feet wet.

KELL

Well, shake 'em off!

Kell notices Brandon and Buck standing there.

KELL

Let me tell you somethin'. That's my sister you got in there, not one of your Goddamn groupies!

Buck glares at Kell as he passes. Kell points him out.

KELL

And this shit-hog right here is gettin' on my last nerve. He keeps eye-ballin' me like he's doin' I'm gonna give him my boot!

143 INT. BRANDON GILL'S HOUSE - DAY

143

Brandon steps into the control booth to see Maggie in the studio. She cries in silence. Brandon pushes a button. He can hear her crying now.

BRANDON

Maggie? Are you okay?

She tries to hold herself together. Strums a chord.

FADE TO:

144 EXT. WEST END AVENUE - NIGHT

144

Brandon's tour bus rumbles past.

145 INT. BRANDON GILL'S BUS - NIGHT

145

Maggie stays seated as the bus rocks back and forth with each turn. It's packed with people and press kits that read: BRANDON GILL. PORCH SWING LOVIN'.

JANICE (30's) is a publicist running down the itinerary for Brandon. Jeremy Carter is manning the phones.

JEREMY CARTER

(into the phone)
That's going to have to wait till after the taping. Just hold 'em back till... hey.

(to Brandon)

Any thoughts on the video director?

JANICE

Tomorrow you've got two interviews on the radio. I've scheduled those first. Rehearsal starts at three o'clock.

BRANDON

Anybody. Just don't make me look gay. With them soft lenses, it's too damn easy.

He sees that Maggie is uneasy. He leans through the chaos.

BRANDON

You're gonna love this. It'll be fun.

Maggie forces a smile. Brandon takes a call.

JANICE

(to Maggie)

There's gonna be photographers.
Grooming's in the back.

MAGGIE

Do you think I need it?

CUT TO:

146 EXT. HOTEL - MAGGIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

146

Wyatt is standing in front of Maggie's room. He looks back at Jasper standing behind him. He is dressed in jeans and his team jersey, holding flowers.

JASPER

Maybe we should'a called.

CUT TO:

147 EXT. THE COUNTRY MUSIC HALL OF FAME - NIGHT

147

CAMERA FLASHES pierce the night as crowds and photographers line the sidewalk to peek at the assembled stars.

Maggie feels dizzy as she bumps around with Brandon's entourage. Her eyes are darker with eye shadow and mascara.

148 INT. THE COUNTRY MUSIC HALL OF FAME - NIGHT

148

The cheers are deafening. A radio station has sponsored the event, so there are plenty of young girls. Brandon ascends the stage and grabs the mic.

BRANDON

(to the crowd)

You know a lot of money and time goes into making a record. And I swear, these label folk treat these releases like a damn shuttle launch.

(laughter)

But in the end... it all gets down to YOU, THE FANS!

Maggie flinches at the screams. Her nerves are on edge.

BRANDON

(to the crowd)

So let's start swinging.

PORCH SWING LOVIN' blares. Flashes go off all over the place. Brandon kicks into gear with his band.

JEREMY CARTER

(coming up behind her)

You sick of this song yet? I know Brandon is.

Maggie tries to smile. Jeremy touches the jewels on her denim jacket. It makes her uncomfortable.

JEREMY CARTER

That's sweet. You get this down on Broadway?

MAGGIE

(shrugs)

I don't know. Brandon got it for me.

JEREMY CARTER

He's got good taste. About everything. He played me that track you two recorded, and I gotta tell ya, I think we can do something with it. And since you and Kell are going separate ways...

MAGGIE

Well, now...

JEREMY CARTER

(interrupting)

I think we can do something with you.

MAGGIE

Like what?

JEREMY CARTER

Well... take a look.

Jeremy points up on the stage as Brandon works the crowd.
 Photographers flash his picture. Girls scream.

Maggie doesn't look excited, she is increasingly on edge. The screams hurt her ears.

CUT TO:

149 EXT. FREEWAY / INT. THE RV - NIGHT

149

The RV is headed east. Kell is at the wheel. Woody and Wade sit in the back with Uncle Faye.

WOODY

Well, that was good while it lasted.

Uncle Faye moves up front and stares at Kell.

KELL

Don't mess with me, Faye! I'm pissed off and I'm driving.

UNCLE FAYE

I think you're acting a fool, Kell.

KELL

She's the one told me to go to hell. You know I'm right! Stop preachin' at me like you think I'm not!

UNCLE FAYE

A selfish, stubborn fool! I don't care if you're right or wrong! She's your little sister. And you left her? If yer Daddy were here he'd whop yer ass...

Kell yanks a hard left across traffic. Everyone on board hangs on as the RV bounces across the GRASSY MEDIAN.

CARS HONK. THEY ALMOST HIT A SEMI, but Kell manages to get the RV on the opposite freeway heading back into Nashville.

Uncle Faye looks satisfied. He knew Kell couldn't leave her. He cracks open a tin can and holds it out to Kell.

UNCLE FAYE

Beanie Weenie?

CUT TO:

150

EXT. THE COUNTRY MUSIC HALL OF FAME - NIGHT

150

Fans of Brandon hold up posters for him to sign. Buck follows him as he crosses to the crowd. Maggie watches the hysteria from a distance.

A photographer calls out to her as he takes her picture.

PHOTOGRAPHER

(FLASH! FLASH!)

Maggie! Maggie Lynn, look this way!
Can you smile, Maggie?

Suddenly there is a flurry of photo flashes going off in her face. She feels something. It's Brandon holding her hand, smiling and waving to the crowd.

BRANDON

How do you like the circus so far?
Just keep smiling, darlin'.

It begins to dawn on Maggie, the gravity of holding Brandon's hand in front of the photographers. She feels uneasy and lost as Brandon leads her by the hand back to the bus.

151

INT. BRANDON GILL'S BUS - NIGHT

151

Brandon is blaring hip hop music as his posse drinks up his liquor. It is an aggressive, ever moving party.

Maggie is fixing herself a glass of water. She drops some ice cubes when the bus turns a corner.

152

INT. BRANDON GILL'S BUS - NIGHT

152

Maggie closes herself off in the bathroom of Brandon's bus. She can't stop staring at her left hand. The hand Brandon held. The hand with her wedding ring.

Maggie looks at herself in the mirror. The make-up on her face suddenly feels like it belongs on a different woman. She turns on the faucet and splashes water on her face.

The door opens. It's Brandon with a bottle of whiskey. He's a little drunk. He stares deep in her eyes.

BRANDON

Hey... you okay?

MAGGIE

I think I'm feeling a little...

He suddenly kisses her, wrapping his arms around her. She is momentarily unable to resist.

BRANDON

(through his kisses)

Do you know how easy it could be...
you and me... I could make you a
star... I could give you everything
you need...

Maggie can't bring herself to touch him with her left hand. With Wyatt's hand. The rumble from the bus grows louder.

She suddenly snaps back to herself. Eyes wide open.

Her hand grips Brandon by the shirt, pulling him off. Her hand pushes him out the door and into the opposite wall for all to see.

Brandon looks stunned.

MAGGIE

I need to get off this bus...

Maggie bolts to the front of the bus, knocking over one of Brandon's BUDDIES whiskey on the rocks.

BUDDY

Hey!

MAGGIE

Stop the bus... please...

BUS DRIVER

Your hotel's just up the street...

MAGGIE

STOP THE BUS!

153

EXT. STREET - DOWN FROM THE HOTEL - NIGHT

153

The bus door opens with a hiss. Maggie hops outside and marches up the street. Brandon follows. The bus creeps alongside.

BRANDON

Maggie? Maggie, where are you
going?

(sees she's pissed)

(MORE)

Alright... ~~BRANDON~~ credit ~~BRANDON~~ told this party early and go back to my place.

MAGGIE

(marching backwards)

I felt like a fool in front of all them cameras! Trottin' me around, like some tarted-up lap-dog!

She rips off her jewel studded jacket and throws it on the ground.

MAGGIE

This ain't ME. I'm not one of your houses you can fix up into a mansion.

BRANDON

I hate to spoil it for you, honey, but this is show business. If you got a problem with dressing up and having people take your picture...

MAGGIE

I don't have a problem with them taking my picture. I have a problem with them taking my picture with YOU HOLDING MY HAND! This isn't your hand to hold, Brandon.

BRANDON

Oh, I get it. So that's your husband's hand.

MAGGIE

No! It's MY GODDAMN HAND!

(a breath)

I don't want to be part of your show. I got my own life. It may not be much. It may not be big enough to paint on the side of a bus. But it's mine. I earned it.

(touches his face)

I'm sorry... but you and me. It's gotta stop.

Maggie walks away. Brandon's anger grows as he follows.

BRANDON

So that's it? You just gonna get up and go?

(no answer, she keeps walking)

(MORE)

Well, I hope ~~BRANDON~~ hasn't had a visit.
Since you used me like a Goddamn
tourist spot.

MAGGIE

Don't get ugly with me. Not now.

BRANDON

So... what? Back to the track and
burping babies? Back to goin' round
and round? How's that been workin'?
Hey, how's that been workin' for
your career, Maggie Lynn?

MAGGIE

If you're sayin' the only way up is
under you, then you can kiss my
ass, Brandon Gill!

Maggie marches up the drive toward her hotel.

154 EXT. HOTEL - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

154

Maggie scans the lot. The RV IS GONE. A piercing pain hits
her - Kell left her.

MAGGIE

He left me... he...

Maggie begins to lose it. Her shoulders vibrate as she sobs.
Brandon puts his hand on her back.

MAGGIE

No... Kell wouldn't do that.
He... he... wouldn't...
(sobbing)
He wouldn't leave me...

BRANDON

Maggie, go get your things
and I'll put you up in a
better hotel. Let me take
care of all this.

Maggie resists, pushing away. Crying and mad.

MAGGIE

Brandon! Stop!

It's a plaintive cry from Maggie. And six rows back, in the
parking lot, her son Jasper HEARS IT.

He sits up in the backseat of the station wagon where he was
sleeping. Wyatt sleeps in the front.

BRANDON

Would you quiet down. This isn't
some country pump and pay this is
Nashville. We have cops.

Buck approaches as the Bus Driver puts the bus in PARK and stands outside.

Jasper scans the lot and zeros in on his mother crying. He then sees Brandon and Buck surround her.

BRANDON

Just get back on the bus, Maggie!
You can argue with me later.

MAGGIE

No. I'm not going.

JASPER

Daddy, get up! Momma's in trouble!
Get up!

Wyatt flinches awake, disoriented. Jasper is already moving. He grabs his Louisville Slugger and is out the door.

WYATT

Huh? Wait, what? Jasp... JASPER!

Wyatt scrambles to get out of the station wagon.

Brandon grabs Maggie by the arm.

JASPER

(shouting)

Hey! Asshole! Get your hands off
her!

Buck sees Jasper charging and Wyatt running after him. Buck bolts to intercept.

Brandon sees the bat coming at him and pulls Maggie back to protect her.

BRANDON

Jesus... Maggie, move!

Buck slams Jasper into a car. BAM! He yelps as the bat falls to the pavement.

WYATT

JASPER!

Maggie heard that. She spins around just in time to see Wyatt tackle Buck, freeing Jasper. They fight against the cars.

Maggie rushes toward her son. But Brandon yanks her back, giving Jasper just enough time to grab the bat.

MAGGIE
BRANDON! NO! That's my son!

Brandon is distracted long enough for Jasper to get up and swing. CRACK! He tags Brandon's left hand with the bat, hard. Brandon shouts in pain as the bus driver tackles Jasper.

BRANDON
AHHHHHH!

MAGGIE
Leave him alone! GET OFF!

Maggie jumps on the man holding down her son, but she is quickly grabbed by another BUDDY and pulled off. Jasper's got his arm pinned behind his back but he's still fighting.

Wyatt punches like a pro, fighting for his family. Back to that parking lot drama. He calls out to Maggie between punches.

WYATT
Maggie! (crack) Maggie!

It takes all three men to wrestle Wyatt to the ground.

BUDDY
STAY STILL YOU SON-OF-A-BITCH!

BUCK
I got my cuffs in the bus.

Buck goes running for the bus. A bright light hits him. He jumps out of the way just as the RV SLAMS into the side of Brandon's tour bus. CRASH!

Uncle Faye kicks the door open and steps out with his old Winchester.

BOOM!

Kell, Woody and Wade are behind him. The family's all here.

UNCLE FAYE
Call off your boys before I lose my temper.

Maggie is released. She bolts to the man holding down her son and pushes him off.

Wyatt is struggling under the two men. Brandon cradles his swelling hand.

BRANDON

Let 'em go.

The two men rise. Wyatt is spent and bloody. Brandon looks down at Maggie.

BRANDON

You sure this is what you want?

Maggie holds Jasper close. She gives Brandon a look that can only mean goodbye.

BRANDON

Well, tic, tock, Cinderella.

Brandon and his crew walk back toward their messed-up bus. Kell helps Wyatt to his feet.

KELL

Howdy, Wyatt. Welcome to Nashville.

CUT TO:

155 INT. HOTEL - BATHROOM - NIGHT

155

Wyatt is sitting on the floor of the bathroom, leaning against the tub. Maggie sits on the commode and tends to the cut over his eye.

The mirror above the sink is occupied by Jasper. He loves the way his black eye looks. He can barely contain his joy.

JASPER

You think it's gonna get darker? I want it to be big and black and full of pus.

MAGGIE

Jasper! Go on in the other room and get in bed.

Jasper's off. Maggie can't help but smile.

MAGGIE

Our boy's first brawl.

WYATT

Gettin' my ass kicked used to not hurt so much. Am I gettin' old?

MAGGIE

It always hurt. You just didn't care so much.

Something catches her eye on Wyatt's face. She takes her thumbs and pinches the skin.

WYATT

Used to be, I'd jump right in and not think twice. Let me tell you... after this beat down...

(reacting to the pinch)
Ouch! What are you doing?

MAGGIE

Saw a little zit. Had to get it.

WYATT

Why?

MAGGIE

Cuz I've done it since I was fifteen.

The statement catches them both off guard. They look at each other, both looking younger, more familiar than ever.

WYATT

(with true sincerity)

You been takin' care of me all these years and look what I did. I just got in the habit of being reckless. Being selfish. And I'm so sorry, Maggie. I'm so sorry I hurt you.

Tears roll down Maggie's cheeks. It's words she's needed to hear. She is genuinely moved.

MAGGIE

Wyatt...

(struggles to speak)

I been bad, too.

She waits for Wyatt's wrath. But it never comes. Instead, he nods with understanding.

WYATT

It's not all what it's cracked up to be, huh?

MAGGIE

No, it's not.

Maggie shakes her head and wipes her tears. He reaches forward and touches her hand.

WYATT

Please come back to me, Maggie. I don't want to live without you in my life.

She allows his touch for a moment and then stands to leave the bathroom.

Nothing resolved.

156 INT. HOTEL - MAGGIE'S ROOM - LATER

156

Maggie sits up next to Jasper laying in bed. She rubs his head. Wyatt is lying on the short couch by the TV.

MAGGIE

Jasper... you need to sleep.

JASPER

I can't stop fightin' in my head.

WYATT

I get like that. Just get your mind on somethin' else, son.

MAGGIE

You want me to sing a song for you?

JASPER

Hands on the Wheel.

Maggie smiles. It warms her heart that he requested it. She takes a breath. Her voice is soft and sweet. It is the same song her Daddy sang in her dream.

Maggie turns to her husband. She sings to him as she rubs the head of their boy.

Their eyes well up as they stare at each other from opposite sides of the room.

She loves her family. She can't help it. She's going home.

FADE TO:

157

EXT. HOTEL - BACK LOT - EARLY MORNING

157

Maggie watches the sunrise in the distance, peeking over the skyline in downtown Nashville.

Kell steps up beside her.

KELL

If we leave now... we'll make it home just in time for supper. Get momma to make her meatloaf with that piquant sauce...

MAGGIE

You're disappointed in me...

Maggie's head drops. Sadness hits. Kell smiles and lifts her head so he can look at his sister.

KELL

Whoa, now... listen. I was asleep at the bottom of a bottle, Mag. You led me out. And I'm stronger. You and me can come back here and kick ass another day.

(makes a point)

But there's got to be another day, Maggie... if it's not gonna be today. You owe that to yourself.

She hugs her brother and holds him tight.

MAGGIE

Thank you, Kell.

FADE TO:

158

EXT. THE PURPLE ROOM - BACK DOOR - DAY

158

The station wagon pulls up to the BACK LOADING DOOR of the club. The TV CREW TRUCKS are parked there as well.

Kell, Uncle Faye, Woody and Wade are already there, leaning against the RV. Jasper and Wyatt join the others.

Maggie and Kell step up into the club. Thick cable is being rolled up by the crew. They are packing up the gear.

KELL

Where's everybody goin'?

Knox is in the middle of it all, an inch away from losing his mind. He sees Maggie and Kell and dashes over.

KNOX

It'd be good if you picked up your phone, Kell!

KELL

We had a... family... situation.

KNOX

Got a situation of my own. I'm wall to wall tonight. Got a VIP list a mile long. And you won't answer your phone.

MAGGIE

We came to say Goodbye, Mr. Knox. I'm gonna be headin' home now. And I just wanted to say how much I appreciate singing in your bar. It's been the best time of my life, I swear. But my family needs me, sir. And I need 'em, too.

KNOX

You're leaving?

MAGGIE

Yes'sir.

KNOX

(grips his neck)

Can this shit storm rain any harder?

Wyatt and Jasper watch from a distance. Maggie and Kell walk back toward the group.

WYATT

What's wrong?

MAGGIE

Brandon's not performing.

(looking at Jasper)

Someone broke his hand.

KELL

TV crews are packing up but all these people bought tickets. So they were given the option of getting their money back or... watching Maggie play tonight.

WYATT

How many of 'em are staying?

KELL

All of 'em.

MAGGIE

Not all of 'em.

KELL

(a little pissed)

I may never went to college,
Maggie, but 90% is as "all" as I'm
ever gonna figure.

MAGGIE

(to Wyatt)

We don't have to do this. We can
still go home.

WYATT

Why?

(pats the RV)

I rotated the tires on this baby.
Home is wherever you want me to
park it.

Maggie's heart melts. A grin spreads across her face as she
stares at her husband leaning against the RV.

She looks at her band. They all want to stay. Steady clapping
is heard. A steady drum beat builds.

CUT TO:

159

INT. THE PURPLE ROOM - BACKSTAGE/ STAGE - NIGHT

159

The bar is slammed. Everyone is standing, their hands held
over their heads, clapping. Jasper is right up front.

Maggie's band is already on stage playing, vamping till she
comes on.

Knox takes the mic and addresses the crowd.

KNOX

Ladies and gentlemen! Please give a
warm welcome to our headliner of
the evening... Maggie Lynn!

Maggie is overwhelmed by the massive response. Huge cheers.
She turns to Wyatt behind her, suddenly anxious.

WYATT

What's wrong?

Maggie turns to her brother and motions to him: GIVE ME A SEC. The cheering turns into a steady clap.

Maggie pulls Wyatt up against the side wall where no one can see them.

WYATT

Maggie they just called your name...

MAGGIE

I'm gettin' a feeling like this is the last time I'm ever gonna sing and I don't wanna feel like that. So you and me gotta have a "come to Jesus" right now.

WYATT

Okay, shoot.

MAGGIE

You're a dirt racer, I'm a country singer. I don't think you and me are supposed to be ordinary.

(Wyatt nods)

We gotta make this work. Both of us. And that means we gotta behave. That means I'm your girl, you're my man and you keep your pecker in your pants or in me at all times.

WYATT

I'm on it.

She wraps herself around him as their mouths and tongues collide. Wade pounds a wicked, beat that builds in intensity. Maggie pulls away and stares her man down.

WYATT

You ride hard, baby. And you come back safe.

Maggie takes the stage. She marches over to her brother Kell and gives him a smack on the ass.

MAGGIE

(into the mic)

WE GOT ANY HELL RAISERS HERE
TONIGHT?

BIG CHEERS. The BAND KICKS IN. Maggie rocks along with her electric guitar. It's the familiar song from the barn and B.Daddy's: Back Home.

She takes the first verse with strength. The audience starts clapping and bouncing to the infectious beat. The song energizes the crowd to pound their boots into the floor.

The crowd can't get enough. Wyatt joins Jasper in the front row. The crowd cheers. The song continues as we:

CUT TO:

160 EXT. THE EL DORA SPEEDWAY - DAY 160

THE EL DORA 100. The stands are packed with Dirt Track race fans from across the country. This race is HUGE compared to the Dirt Ring back home. A televised event.

Like Brandon Gill in the beginning, Maggie is performing on a flatbed 18 wheeler stage. She's looking hot, wearing an ORANGE RACE SUIT.

Kell takes the solo. The crowds cheer.

DOWN ON PIT ALLY: Jasper assists Keough in prepping Wyatt's newly painted dirt racer.

Wyatt is also wearing his orange race outfit. He slaps hands with Jasper and climbs into his car.

Wanda leans Shelby inside to give her Daddy a good luck kiss. 50 cars are preparing to exit the infield on to the track.

Mary and Kim sell MAGGIE LYNN T-shirts and CDs along with the other vendors. Mary is particularly vocal, wearing her shirt pulled tight with a knot over her navel.

MARY
Come on! Buy American!

Mary spins around showing the back of her T-shirt. It reads: PUTTIN' THE C*NT BACK IN CO*NTRY!

Wade ends his solo. A Tennessee flag drops behind the band. The crowd shouts and cheers as Maggie sings the chorus.

The PACE CAR leads the pack of dirt racers out onto the track. Wyatt grips his steering wheel with confidence.

Maggie smiles at her brother Kell. She looks so happy.

The PACE CAR moves to the side. Wyatt sees a clean track before him with his wife's music in his ears.

The GREEN FLAG WAVES. Their race begins.

CUT TO BLACK

THE END