



rain

PATSY

Screenplay by
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Based on the books "Honky Tonk Angel: The Intimate Story of
Patsy Cline" by Ellis Nassour & "Patsy: The Life and Times
of Patsy Cline" by Margaret Jones

RAIN MANAGEMENT

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"I don't do anythin' halfway.
Halfway is half-assed and that ain't me."

FROM BLACK:

A flutter of notes. Then, a big and brassy voice belts out--

Craaaazy, I'm crazy for feeling so
lonelyyy / I'm crazy, crazy for
feeeeling so bluuuuee...

To say this is a powerful voice is an understatement. It's the type that can make you dream or make you cry. It opens up as many worlds as it does wounds. And when it enters your ears, it goes straight up and tingles your brain.

Simply, one of the greatest voices to ever grace the Earth.

OPEN ON: the round, emotive face of VIRGINIA HENSLEY, aka **PATSY CLINE (29)**.

THE DATE - NOVEMBER 29, 1961
THE PLACE - CARNEGIE HALL

Patsy's wearing a black-and-gold brocade cocktail dress, singing her heart out to a PACKED house -

Worry, why do I let myself worry?
Wondering what in the world did I do?

The audience is completely enraptured by how evocative Patsy is. There's so much passion in her voice and this moment means so damn much that even a few tears roll down her cheek...

Crazy, for thinking that my love
could hold youuu--

FREEZE FRAME. Right there, in the middle of the high note. Then Patsy's voice comes in. And this time, it's breezy - spunky - southern. Brimming with a comforting familiarity.

PATSY (V.O.)
Hold it! Hold it right there, Hoss.
What's a country girl from Winchester-Virginia doing at Carnegie Hall during New York city's frou-frou era??

EXT. LITTLE ROCK DRYERSBURG AVIONICS STRIP - DAY

MARCH 5, 1963. Wearing a cowboy hat, a cowboy outfit, and white cowboy boots, **PATSY (30)** walks the tarmac towards a green-and-white PIPER PA-24 COMANCHE four-seater plane. Alongside her, manager **RANDY HUGHES (34)** and country singers COWBOY COPAS (49) and HAWKSHAW HAWKINS (41).

Patsy smirks. Then turns to us, BREAKING THE 4TH WALL -

PATSY

Howdy Hoss! You don't mind if I call ya Hoss, do ya? I call ev'ryone Hoss. The name's Virginia Hensley, but you might know me as Patsy Cline. If you haven't heard the name, you've certainly heard the songs. I'm what many fine people east of Nevada call a country star.

(winks; tips her hat)

Now, don't get fooled by the ritzy title. The life ain't for ev'ryone, Lots o'small ups and furious downs. But heck, I love it -

INSERT - Patsy's on stage with a smile the size of the Mississippi.

PATSY (V.O.)

I love singin' in honky-tonks and sleazy joints.

INSERT - Patsy's squeezed against the window of a Buick packed with MUSICIANS // Patsy opens the door of a motel room to roaches scurrying away.

PATSY (V.O.)

I love travelin' on dusty roads with sweaty men and stayin' in seedy motels.

INSERT - Patsy signs autographs. Soaking up the attention.

PATSY (V.O.)

And I sure as heck love meanin' somethin' special to a whole lot of folks I don't even know.

BACK TO TARMAC

PATSY

I love it 'cause singin' doesn't take anythin' away from me, only gives. I don't have to take care of it, it takes care of me.

Patsy's eye gets caught on the nasty weather up ahead - thick rain stemming from dark, dense clouds.

PATSY

Hey Randy, you sure about flyin' with them clouds? They're gettin' thicker than mama's gravy.

There's yet to be a situation that alarms Randy.

RANDY

Have faith in my bird, Pats. Never fails to take us where we need to go.

Patsy resigns herself to this. Turns back to us--

PATSY

That's Randy, my manager, and today, my pilot too. Randy's the type o'man who's been riding a gravy train with biscuit wheels all his life.

Cowboy Copas cuts in -

COPAS

Hey Patsy, what's the first thing you're gonna do when you get home?

PATSY

Hug my kids, kiss Charlie, and eat the country ham mama's been soakin' for the past day 'n' a half.

COPAS

How 'bout that. Can I come?

PATSY

Only if you give Charlie a lil' kiss too. Whaddya say?

COPAS

Heck no. Even I have 'nuff sense not to spit downwind.

Copas and Patsy laugh as they approach the plane's airstairs. Randy and Hawkins go up and into the Piper Comanche. Then Copas. And when Patsy takes the first step--

A shiver goes down her spine. Stopping her in her tracks. Patsy takes another look at the dark clouds. Lasting long enough to prompt Randy to pop his head out--

RANDY

What are you doing, Pats? C'mon, time to go home.

Patsy shakes it off. As she walks up the airstairs, she confides in us, wistfully--

PATSY

Took a whole lot of blood, sweat 'n' tears to get here, Hoss.

INSERT - quick flashes of Patsy's rollercoaster of a life:

Bright lights, big crowds, recording studios, fast cars, even faster lovers, bloody faces, bruised bodies, pill popping, glitz, glamour, and oh so much debauchery...

PATSY

If you're willin' to hear the story,
I'd like to tell it myself. After
all, if somebody's gonna talk about
the Cline, it's gonna be Patsy
goddamn Cline.

Patsy closes the airstairs and we **CUT TO:**

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

WINCHESTER, VIRGINIA. 1945. **YOUNG PATSY (13)** is in bed crying at full volume. In excruciating pain. Rashes on her body. A cold press on her forehead.

PATSY (V.O.)

I suppose we might as well begin with
the thing that got me where I am today -
ma pipes. Funny story, almost had to go
on to the great reward to get 'em.

MRS. HILDA HENSLEY (30), Patsy's mother, watches worriedly and helplessly as a DOCTOR gives Patsy an injection.

PATSY (V.O.)

When I was 13, I had a rheumatic fever
that knocked me on my ass. Gave me a
God-awful throat infection -

NEXT DAY

Patsy's now in an OXYGEN TENT. Wheezing. Frail. Thin as a rake.

PATSY (V.O.)

I got it so bad the good doctor had to
put me in an oxygen tent. Lemme tell
ya, you don't ever wanna need one.

Mrs. Hensley hovers, trying not to break down, as Patsy's siblings - **SAM JR. (5)** and **SYLVIA MAE (2)** - sit very quietly on a chair, overwhelmed by the commotion.

SAM

The kid's gonna make it or what?

Patsy's father, **SAM (56)**, leans against the door frame, gobbling up a bottle of CHEAP WHISKEY from a brown paper bag.

PATSY (V.O.)

That's daddy. And daddy's a son of a bitch. How much of a son of a bitch? World class. But I'll say this, he was right to ask the question -

ANOTHER DAY

The Doctor performs CPR on Patsy. Mrs. Hensley's on her knees. *Praying. Sobbing.* Sam's nowhere to be found.

PATSY (V.O.)

In those years, that fever killed more kids than anythin' else, and I got real close to bein' a part of the statistics when my heart stopped beatin'. But the Almighty had other plans for me -

THAT NIGHT

Young Patsy slowly comes to. Takes a moment to register she's breathing. Then looks at Mrs. Hensley, who's fallen asleep by her side, a ROSARY wrapped tight around her fist.

Patsy's eyes turns a shade lighter. As if reflecting a light. She's LOOKING AT SOMETHING. Or someone. Whatever it is, we don't see it, but Patsy's ears perk up, listening...

Mrs. Hensley JOLTS AWAKE. When she sees Patsy conscious, tears start flowing again. Hugging her tight -

MRS. HENSLEY

Oh my dear Ginny. I prayed 'n' prayed. I thought I was gonna lose you.

YOUNG PATSY

Don't worry mama. Jesus was here. He told me it ain't my time yet.

Mrs. Hensley kisses her Rosary, thanking the heavens.

ANOTHER DAY

Feeling sprier, Patsy laps up a bowl of Jell-O.

PATSY (V.O.)

I learned things happen the way they need to happen. And this right here was proof -

INT. HENSLEY HOME - PATSY'S ROOM - ANOTHER DAY

PATSY, now 14 and fully recovered, puts on a WALLY FOWLER record and SINGS ALONG in front of the mirror.

PATSY (V.O.)

When I recovered 3 months later, I had the voice that gave me my career.

We DRAW CLOSE ON Patsy, her throat vibrating, feeling every note as it comes from the pit of her stomach and out into the world, making it just a little bit better.

Sam BURSTS through the door. He can barely stand straight, sauced out of his mind.

SAM

Goddamn it Ginny, will you quit your yakkin' already.

PATSY

But daddy, this is your Wally Fowler record. I thought you liked it.

SAM

I like it when he sings it and when I choose to goddamn play it.

MRS. HENSLEY

(coming up behind him)

Let the girl sing, Sam. Makes her happy.

Sam turns around and BACKHANDS her. Patsy runs to her mother.

SAM

I'm tired of ev'ryone talkin' back in my house. I wan' some goddamn peace and quiet.

Sam stumbles off. But not before knocking against the armoire.

PATSY (V.O.)

What did I tell ya? World class. But mama tells me it wasn't always like that. There was a time - *'fore the war 'n' the depression* - when he had a hold o'the bottle.

Patsy holds onto Mrs. Hensley, who gently strokes her hair.

MRS. HENSLEY

Don't worry honey, if singin's what you wanna do, we'll get you singin'.

INT. HENSLEY HOME - HALLWAY/LIVING ROOM - ANOTHER DAY

Patsy sneaks through the hallway and past the living room, where an ANGELICAL VOICE can be heard--

Singing along to a Wally Fowler record in between long swigs from a whiskey bottle is none other than Sam.

Patsy stops, entranced by the beauty of her father's voice and how, for just a moment, he looks so peaceful, so harmless...

Sensing a presence, Sam's head shoots in Patsy's direction, who disappears from view just in time.

INT. BAPTIST CHURCH - LATER

Patsy shines as she belts 'How Great Thou Art' in CHURCH CHOIR.

PATSY (V.O.)

Mama put me in a choir. Soon enough I was doin' better than ev'ryone else but had nowhere to go. Which was about as useful as tits on a bull.

INT. HENSLEY HOME - KITCHEN - ANOTHER DAY

Mrs. Hensley's doing the dishes. Patsy marches in with fiery determination--

YOUNG PATSY

I'm sick and tired of singin' the same hymns, mama. It's time I make my move. I'm goin' on the radio.

INT. WINC RADIO STATION - DJ BOOTH - ANOTHER DAY

The ON AIR sign is on. In the DJ chair, JOLTIN' JACK (30s) reads an AD from a script in his most consumer-friendly voice -

JOLTIN' JACK

...so next time you have a penny to spend, spend it on good, wholesome foods. Tootsie rolls - made with body-nourishing milk.

(modulates his voice)

And now folks, let's give the number 1 song in the country another spin--

Jack puts on [Al Dexter's GUITAR POLKA](#). When the ON AIR sign goes off, an ASSISTANT walks in with a shit-eating grin.

ASSISTANT
Someone's here to see ya, Jack.

Patsy emerges, radiating confidence.

YOUNG PATSY
Mr. Jack, I'd like a chance to sing
live on the radio.

JOLTIN' JACK
(hearty chuckle)
I'll be damned. What's your name?

YOUNG PATSY
Virginia Hensley. Mama calls me Ginny.

JOLTIN' JIM
Well Ginny, if you got 'nuff nerve to
stand before a mike and sing over the air
live, I've got 'nuff nerve to let ya.

DJ BOOTH - LATER

Patsy and her nerve, singing over the radio. Joltin' Jack
and his Assistant watch on, taken with her talent.

PATSY (V.O.)
I caught the bug that day. And once
you catch it, Hoss, there ain't
nothin' you can do about it.

EXT. THE PALACE THEATRE IN WINCHESTER - ANOTHER NIGHT

1949. PATSY (16) *zips* by a line of people waiting to enter
The Palace. Stops at the front of the line - *gauging the*
TICKET SELLER's attention - choosing her moment...

When his head tilts down long enough to grab change from the
register, Patsy makes her move and sneaks by him. The Ticket
Seller catches on and yells at her, but it's too late. Patsy
disappears into the crowd.

INT. PALACE THEATRE - BACKSTAGE - MINUTES LATER

The place is bustling. Patsy doesn't belong, but moves like
she does. As her eyes search for a specific someone, a CREW
MEMBER grabs Patsy's arm -

CREW MEMBER
Where do you think you're going?

YOUNG PATSY
To see Mr. Wally Fowler.

CREW MEMBER
Does he know that?

YOUNG PATSY
He's been waitin' to see me all his life.

CREW MEMBER
(laughs; then--)
Haven't heard that one 'fore. Okay,
little girl, he's right over there.

He points to stage-right, where WALLY FOWLER (32) is hanging out with his QUARTET.

YOUNG PATSY
Thanks mister. And the name's not
little girl, it's Virginia Hensley.

Patsy walks over to Wally with a fire behind her eyes. Tugs at his sleeve -

YOUNG PATSY
Mr. Fowler. Mr. Wally Fowler.

Wally turns, looks down at Patsy.

YOUNG PATSY
I just love you and your quartet, and
I think I'd be a great addition to it.

WALLY
(to the Quartet)
Boys, she wants to join us!
(laughs; to Patsy)
So you think you can sing?

YOUNG PATSY
I know so, Mr. Fowler.

WALLY
Okay young lady, you sing and I'll
tell you what I think.

YOUNG PATSY
Just like that?

WALLY
Just like that.

YOUNG PATSY
But--

WALLY

What? You wanna back down now that
I'm giving you your big chance?

Patsy hesitates. Wally snickers and turns back to the Quartet. Patsy feels the opportunity slipping through her fingers...

No. She's not gonna let it go.

Patsy closes her eyes. Focuses. *Then begins to sing.* Wally hears the first notes and suddenly he's paying attention. We DRAW CLOSER on Wally as he listens and listens...

STAGE - LATER

Fowler leans into the mic -

WALLY

And now ladies and gentlemen, I'd like
to introduce my latest discovery. Give
a big round of applause for a local
girl, Ms. Virginia Hensley.

Patsy takes the stage under a shower of support. She starts singing and everybody in the crowd with clean ears intuitively knows that one day she'll sing better than anyone else.

PATSY (V.O.)

Right there, a divine peace came over me
and I knew that no matter what, my
destiny was on a stage, singin' country
to folks who lived on a wish 'n' a
prayer. So I set my sights on Nashville,
'cause any country singer worth its salt
knows you're only a real country singer
when you make it to the Grand Ole Opry.

CUE Hank Williams's MOVE ON OVER and CUT TO:

ARCHIVE FOOTAGE OF THE RYMAN AUDITORIUM IN NASHVILLE

The 2.300-seat home of the weekly GRAND OLE OPRY LIVE RADIO and TV BROADCAST is a true beauty. Inside and out. We see FOOTAGE of Hank Williams, Roy Acuff, the Carter Family, and other stars performing to rowdy crowds. We also see FAMILIES across America glued to their tubed TVs during THE OPRY HOUR.

EXT. RYMAN AUDITORIUM - DAY

Patsy marvels at the imposing church-like structure. Dreaming of being in it. Talking Mrs. Hensley's ear off about it.

PATSY (V.O.)
Wally didn't put me in his quartet,
but he arranged for an Opry audition.

INT. WSM RADIO - ROOM - NASHVILLE - DAY

Patsy sings in front of TALENT SCOUTS. All taken with her.

PATSY (V.O.)
Ev'rybody loved me, but God only wan'ed
me to have a taste, not a full meal -

INT. WSM RADIO - OUTSIDE ROOM - NASHVILLE - LATER

Patsy's on a chair, watching the Scouts talk to Mrs. Hensley.
After a beat, she approaches Patsy with a heavy look.

PATSY (V.O.)
Those folks wan'ed me to come back and
sing for their bosses. Problem was,
mama couldn't afford to stay the night
in Nashville.

EXT./INT. DIRT ROAD/CAR - LATER

Mrs. Hensley's jalopy drives past a "LEAVING NASHVILLE" sign.
Patsy looks out the window. Dejected, but never defeated.
Mrs. Hensley squeezes her hand and offers a motherly smile.

PATSY (V.O.)
Soon, ev'rybody forgot about me and
'twas for the best. I had to focus on
helpin' mama pay her bills -

EXT. HENSLEY HOME - ONE YEAR AGO

Sam leaves the Hensley home with a bottle of whiskey in one
hand and a beaten-up suitcase in the other.

PATSY (V.O.)
The son of a bitch left us the year
'fore. Took his goddamn bottle and his
goddamn attitude, and I said '*good
goddamn riddance*'. If he couldn't ride a
nightmare without fallin' out o'bed,
what good was he ever gonna be to us?

Patsy holds little Sylvia Mae in her arms as she stands on
the porch of their broken-down duplex, watching Sam go. If
stares could kill, Sam would turn to ash.

PATSY (V.O.)
 I put my head down and worked just
 about any job I could find -

VARIOUS SHOTS OF PATSY GRINDING AWAY

At the Greyhound Terminal, selling tickets; in a processing plant, butchering chickens; behind the soda fountain at a drugstore, serving vanilla cokes and lime rickeys... She hustles and bustles, and does it with a spirited attitude.

PATSY (V.O.)
 But if you think I didn't sing ev'ry
 chance I got, you sure as shit don't
 know what greases my wagon.

VARIOUS SHOTS OF PATSY SINGING EVERYWHERE AND ANYWHERE

At Honky Tonks; church socials; benefits; fraternal parties; carnivals; dance halls... she even records a aluminum demo disk at a music store studio and sends it on the mail.

PATSY (V.O.)
 Ever heard the sayin' 'water droppin'
 day-by-day wears the hardest rock away'?
 That was *the Cline* in all her glory.

EXT./INT. DIRT ROAD/CAR - SEVERAL SHOTS

Mrs. Hensley's focused on the road ahead. Patsy rides shotgun, wearing a flamboyant cowgirl outfit that shines brightly when the sun hits her.

PATSY (V.O.)
 And Mama? Mama was an angel. She hand-
 sewed thousands of sequins 'n'
 rhinestones onto my cowgirl outfits.
 Then she dropped me off and picked me
 up at ev'ry joint that gave me a stage.

INT. HENSLEY HOME - SEVERAL SHOTS

Patsy and Mrs. Hensley arrive home exhausted. Fall onto bed.

PATSY (V.O.)
 We got home ev'ry night at one in the
 mornin', and by six we were up
 drinkin' cups of ambition and fixin'
 breakfast for Sam and Sylvia Mae -

KITCHEN - CRACK OF DAWN - SEVERAL SHOTS

In between sips of coffee, Patsy and Mrs. Hensley prep toast, eggs, and boxed OJ for the kids. Their empty cabinets speak to their hardships. And yet, there's a true sense of family enveloping them.

PATSY (V.O.)

This was the beaten path for a few years. When I finally stopped and looked in the mirror, I saw a full-blown woman with woman needs and desires -

INT. MELODY LANE HONKY TONK - NIGHT

EARLY 1952. **PATSY** (19; 5'4, brown hair, sparkling brown eyes) is now a woman every man would take a second look at.

PATSY (V.O.)

I grew up fast, Hoss. I was well-endowed and had all the right moves.

She wears jeans, dangling earrings, and a tight-fitting sweater with a gaudy color. Red lipstick on her lips and lots of make up. But her drawing card is a SMILE that'll hog tie any man around. It certainly works with the COWBOY she's shamelessly flirting with -

PATSY

So you're the cock o'the hen-house, huh?

He leans in and whispers sweet nothings into Patsy's ear. Patsy grabs him by the hand and takes him to the dance floor. Where she joins **CONNIE (18)**, a gentle soul with even gentler eyes being wooed by a handsome HILLBILLY.

PATSY (V.O.)

That's Connie. A helluva singer and my best friend -

INT. ANOTHER HONKY TONK - MONTHS EARLIER

Patsy watches Connie sing to an unenthusiastic crowd, taken with her zest nonetheless.

PATSY (V.O.)

As soon as I saw her, I knew we were destined to be backseat buddies in the highway of life.

MINUTES LATER: Patsy walks up to Connie, who seems dispirited as she packs up her stuff.

PATSY

Hiya, the name's Virginia and I think you're terrific.

CONNIE

Can I get you to tell that to the manager? He doesn't wan' me back.

She's joking, but she clearly doesn't know who she's talking to.

PATSY

Don't worry, you got the Cline on your side now.

Connie watches as Patsy walks up to the MANAGER and gives him hell. Wearing him down with each passing moment.

CONNIE

Well, I'll be damned.

Finally, Patsy leaves the poor Manager and walks back.

PATSY

Seems like he's just a lil' hard of hearin', but he's gonna fix that--
3 times a week for the next 3 months.

Connie's beyond grateful, but freezes up. This was unexpected.

PATSY

I'm hungry. Whaddya say to a fat, juicy burger?

VARIOUS SHOTS OF PATSY AND CONNIE BEING THE BEST OF FRIENDS

EATING CHEESEBURGERS (what an appetite Patsy has!) and gossiping; watching the ARTHUR GODFREY TALENT SHOW on TV and dreaming of being on it; hanging with COWBOYS and HILLBILLIES - drinking, partying, and yes, SLEEPING AROUND. In fact, this would be a good time to tell you Patsy LOVES sex. More than that, she loves fucking. She's very good at it, too.

PATSY (V.O.)

For me, life became all about the three
F's: *family, food 'n' fuckin'.*

EXT. WINCHESTER STREETS - DAY

A MAN and his BUDDY see Patsy walking in their direction, wearing short-shorts and a bare midriff.

PATSY (V.O.)
Folks got judgmental fast.

To his Buddy, but loud enough for Patsy to hear--

MAN
Careful now, here comes the Honky
Tonk Angel. They say she's wilder
than a peach orchard boar.

PATSY
(FLIPPING HIM)
Bite me!

The boys like this. Stir and buzz like immature jerks. As Patsy walks by them, the Man takes a full palm to Patsy's ass --

Immediately, her hand flies across the Man's face. It carries so much power that he even loses balance.

PATSY
There's more where that came from.

The Man holds his face, ashamed and humbled. His Buddy goes quiet as a mouse.

PATSY (V.O.)
Screw 'em. I was enjoyin' the love
merry-go-round and wasn't 'bout to let
bitter young bucks who couldn't get a
ticket to ride bring me down.

EXT. GOODE MOTOR COMPANY AUTO SHOP - DAY

SEPTEMBER 1952. Patsy walks up to **BILL PEER (30's)**, who's working on the motor of a white Cadillac.

PATSY (V.O.)
Things changed when Bill came into the
picture. And Bill, well, that's a real
Honky Tonk Angel -

PATSY
Are you Bill? From Bill Peer and The
Melody Boys?

Bill turns around and when he takes a good look at Patsy, he knows right away his whole world's about to change.

BILL
Yes ma'am. What can I do you for?

PATSY
I'd like to audition for you. And if
you like what you hear, maybe I can
sing in your band.

Stars shine in Bill's eyes.

INT. MOOSE LOUNGE - STAGE - COUPLE WEEKS LATER

Bill plays the guitar while Patsy sings for a rowdy crowd.
They eat it all up, in love with Patsy's voice.

INT. MOOSE LOUNGE - BY THE BAR - ANOTHER NIGHT

It's just Bill and Patsy. Patsy's having a drink. Bill isn't.
But he's all over her, like butter on a sizzling steak.

BILL
You're a star and I sure am gonna make
you one. But we gotta do somethin'
about that name.

PATSY
Kinda like the one I'm stuck with.

BILL
Virginia just ain't right for a
singer. Do you have a middle name?

PATSY
Patterson. After mama.

BILL
That'll do.

PATSY
What will?

BILL
Patsy. Patsy Hensley.

PATSY AND BILL GO THROUGH THE MOTIONS

MOOSE LOUNGE - BACK OFFICE

Bill's on the phone. Patsy hovers on pins and needles.

PATSY (V.O.)
Bill became my manager and called all
his contacts in Nashville -

BILL

Trust me Ernest, you'll wanna hear this gal. Kitty Wells, Goldie Hill - their voices don't hold a candle to Patsy's... Why don't I send ya a tape?

Bill says it as he's already shoving a DEMO TAPE into an envelope addressed to one ERNEST TUBB in Nashville.

MOOSE LOUNGE - STAGE

Patsy and Bill on stage. Patsy's in her trademark white cowboy outfit. She gives it her all, but not everybody loves it -

HECKLER

Get off the stage. My mute mother sings better than you.

PATSY

Your mute mother can kiss my ass!

The Heckler LOSES IT. Would ring Patsy's neck if it weren't for the HILLBILLIES holding him down. Patsy keeps provoking him, giving the crowd the best entertainment they've had all week.

SPECIALTY BOUTIQUE

Patsy walks out with a hundred-watt smile. Bill follows, juggling a small mountain of bags and boxes.

PATSY (V.O.)

Bill wan'ed me to look my best at all times. Called it a *business investment*.

DINER

As Patsy wolfs down a plate of FRIED CHICKEN, Bill cuts her a check for a couple hundred bucks.

PATSY (V.O.)

When he heard I had money troubles, he gave me a hand. I wan'ed to say no since Bill worked two jobs so he could finance his music, but--

MOTEL ROOM

Patsy and Bill MAKE LOVE. But only Bill has hearts in his eyes.

PATSY (V.O.)

I found ways to make him happy. After a while, the poor sap wan'ed to marry me.

MOOSE LOUNGE - BACKSTAGE

Bill's on his knees, holding a RING -

BILL

I can't live without you, Virginia.

PATSY

Hoss, ain't you forgettin' somethin'?

BILL'S HOUSE - SUBURBIA

Bill pulls up to a house where TWO KIDS play on the lawn and a woman, JENNY (20s), lays on a chair, catching sun. The kids run up to hug Bill, then he leans in to kiss Jenny.

PATSY (V.O.)

I knew better than lettin' Bill divorce his wife. Plus, Gerald came into my life and, well, *I liked Gerald too...*

INT. MOOSE LOUNGE - NIGHT

OCTOBER 1952. We're on a 5'8, 220-pound man dressed to the nines, making way through the crowded dance floor. Not much of a looker, but radiates confidence. This is **GERALD CLINE (28)**. When Bill's band comes out, Gerald locks in on Patsy. Knocked out by her. Love at first sight. A feeling that grows as she sings BLUE MOON OF KENTUCKY. Gerald turns to a HILLBILLY--

GERALD

Who's the looker?

HILLBILLY

That's Miss Patsy Hensley.

Gerald grins. His eyes turn a shade brighter.

GERALD

No sir. That's the future Mrs. Cline.

LATER - BY THE STAGE

Gerald chats up Patsy, who's into what he's selling. Bill's behind them, hanging on every word, consumed with jealousy.

PATSY

(sizing him up)

My, you're quite a big fella, ain't ya?

GERALD

Yeah, and I got myself a big new car.

PATSY

Which of you is fastest?

GERALD

Wan' me to show ya?

Patsy slams down her drink, a devilish smile on her face.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - ANOTHER DAY

Gerald drives Patsy around the COUNTRYSIDE on his brand new Chevy Convertible. And drives fast. Patsy's having a blast, belting a *WHOOOOO* as the wind almost takes her cowboy hat.

PATSY (V.O.)
Big fella was 'bout 8 years older,
always dressed like he was goin' to a
weddin', and liked to pretend he lived
in high cotton. I liked pretendin' too.

EXT. MRS. HENSLEY'S HOME - DRIVEWAY - ANOTHER DAY

Gerald wheels a couple of barrels of kerosene up the driveway. Mrs. Hensley waits on the porch, beyond grateful.

PATSY (V.O.)
Gerald was crazy 'bout me and he knew
how to bait the cow to catch the calf.
He did ev'rythin' for my family -

SERIES OF SHOTS

Gerald repairs a leaky pipe under the sink; helps Sylvia Mae with her homework; plays catch with Sam Jr.

EXT. MRS. HENSLEY'S HOME - DRIVEWAY - ANOTHER DAY

Gerald guides Patsy down the driveway. Her eyes are closed and Gerald insists they stay that way.

PATSY (V.O.)
Did ev'rythin' for me too.

GERALD
Okay baby, open them eyes up.

Patsy opens her eyes to find a shiny new BUICK ROADMASTER in red and white. Patsy's elated. Gives Gerald a big, wet kiss.

INT. PATSY'S BUICK ROADMASTER - ANOTHER DAY

Patsy looks at the shiny RING Gerald holds in his hands.

PATSY (V.O.)
So when he asked me to marry him, I said
yes. And why wouldn't I? Big fella was
offerin' what was a dream 'n' a half in
those days. But I gave him a warnin' -

PATSY
I wanna go to the top, big fella.
That ain't changin' just 'cause we're
gettin' itched.

INT. PATSY & GERALD'S APARTMENT - ANOTHER DAY

The door swings open and Gerald enters carrying Patsy. Just like NEWLYWEDS do. Thrilled smiles on their faces.

PATSY (V.O.)
Now, I might've been a married woman,
but that don't mean I stopped livin' -

INT. MOOSE LOUNGE - ANOTHER NIGHT

Patsy's on the dance floor with Bill. Slobbering all over him. Drawing plenty of catty commentary from other patrons.

INT. PATSY & GERALD'S APARTMENT - ANOTHER NIGHT

Gerald's on the couch, brewing a mood, drinking beer. Several empty cans sit close by. When Patsy enters, he springs up -

GERALD
Home at last. It's two in the goddamn
morning.

PATSY
Gee Gerald, you can tell the time.

GERALD
I wanna know what you been doin' and
who you been doin' it with.

PATSY
...rehearsing, if you must know.

GERALD
Goddamn it, you're spending more time
with a married man with kids than your
own husband.

PATSY
I ain't givin' up my music.

GERALD
I ain't askin' you to give it up. Just
stay home and be with me sometimes...

Gerald softens a bit. Wraps his arms around Patsy's waist.

GERALD

Baby, I need you. I wanna take care of you.

PATSY

(shoves him off)

Get off it, Gerald. What you want is a housewife and that ain't me.

Gerald's mood does a 180 again. Demanding--

GERALD

No more gallivanting. You're staying home!

PATSY

Ain't gonna.

GERALD

But Patsy, baby--

PATSY

None o' that *baby* stuff. I can't be a singer and have supper on the table at 5:30. I have one thing on my mind-- becomin' a star. If you don't like it, you're welcome to pack your bags.

Patsy storms off, leaving behind a befuddled Gerald.

PATSY (V.O.)

But I gotta be honest, Hoss-- music wasn't the only thing on my mind.

EXT. CONNIE'S HOUSE - ANOTHER DAY

Gerald drops off Patsy at Connie's. They both wave Gerald goodbye and walk into the house. As soon as he leaves, Bill pulls up and HONKS twice. Patsy walks out and gets into Bill's car. As they drive off, we--

CROSS FADE TO NIGHT TIME

Same song and dance, but reversed-- Bill drops Patsy off and shortly after Gerald picks her up. We see this happening multiple times.

PATSY (V.O.)

I know you're judgin' me, Hoss, and I don't blame ya. But don't you worry, I used my sheet for a tablecloth and I paid the price -

INT. GERALD'S CHEVY - ANOTHER NIGHT

Gerald and Patsy are riding in silence when Patsy suddenly YELPS, stricken with a sharp stomach cramp.

GERALD

What's wrong!?

Patsy clutches her stomach. Contorts herself trying to stop the acute pain. Gerald takes his eyes off the road for just a second.

GERALD

Baby, talk to me.

But Patsy can only moan. *That is*, until she notices the car veering into the opposite lane and sees headlights COMING STRAIGHT AT THEM -

PATSY

LOOK OUT!

- HOOOOOONKKK - Gerald swerves right in time. The car SKIDS and almost goes down a ditch, but Gerald - *an expert driver* - manages to regain control. Pulls up to the curb.

PATSY

Christ Gerald, you wanna kill us?

When the adrenaline subsides, the pain comes back. Patsy lets out a groan and hits the dashboard.

GERALD

Baby, you're not okay. I'm takin' ya to the hospital.

PATSY

Don't you dare. I have a show to do.
(he hesitates)
Goddammit Gerald, just drive!

INT. MOOSE LOUNGE - LATER

Patsy powers through a performance, pain searing savagely. Connie watches on, concerned.

INT. CONNIE'S HOUSE - BATHROOM/HALLWAY - LATER

Connie knocks frantically on the door.

CONNIE

Pat, talk to me... are you okay?...

Patsy isn't. In fact, she's on the floor, bleeding all over the place. Hands clasping her stomach.

CONNIE
I'm comin' in -

Connie does, and when she sees Patsy breathing heavily in a pool of blood, she freaks the fuck out.

CONNIE
My God, I'm callin' an ambulance.

Connie turns to leave, but Patsy musters the energy to--

PATSY
No, don't!

CONNIE
Look at all this blood. You ain't right.

Patsy exhales. Dealing with the pain.

PATSY
I'm gettin' better. You can trust me,
Connie. I ain't gonna die on you.

Doesn't help, Connie looks all shook up.

PATSY
Take that worried look off your face.
A couple of asp'rin will do the trick.

CONNIE
Asp'rin? Pat, for Chrissakes, you need
a real doctor.

PATSY
Doctors talk. I ain't proud o' what I
done, but it don't mean it's anybody's
business but mine.

CONNIE
I know, but--

PATSY
Whaddya say we clean up this mess?

Connie nods. Leaves for a moment and Patsy stops faking it. Grabs onto the toilet seat and uses the last of her strength to pull herself up. Then, breathing the pain in and out -

PATSY
*Goddammit Cline. What have you got
yourself into?*

Connie returns with as many towels as she can carry. Drops to her knees and starts soaking up the blood. *There's so much of it.*

PATSY

Never a dull moment with the Cline, *huh?*

CONNIE

This ain't funny, Pat. What's Bill gonna say? *What's Gerald gonna say?*

PATSY

What they always say if they find out, which they ain't.

(Connie doesn't
acknowledge)

Connie - which they ain't!

INT. RANDY'S PIPER COMANCHE PLANE - DAY

PRESENT. Patsy's settled on the rear-left of the plane. Copas is to her right, noodling on his guitar. TALKING TO US--

PATSY

Quite the hayride for a Winchester teen, wouldn't ya say? Well, hold on to your rear ends. Now my life really begins...

INT. BILL MCCALL'S OFFICE - DAY

SEPTEMBER 4, 1954. PATSY (22) stares at a CONTRACT while Bill and Gerald tower over her, smoking. On the other side of the desk sits **WILLIAM "BILL" MCCALL (54)**, President of 4-Star Records and a tough-as-nails businessman.

MCCALL

That's a standard AFM contract. It specifies a minimum of sixteen 78pm record sides, or the equivalent thereof. The compositions to be recorded are to be mutually agreed upon you, Bill, and myself. Your services are exclusive with 4-Star for 2 years, with a 1-year renewal option. Any recording made will be the property of 4-Star, and you'll be paid a royalty of 2.34 percent of the retail price on the records sold in the U.S. Any questions?

PATSY

Just one. This royalty here - ain't this half of what country stars make?

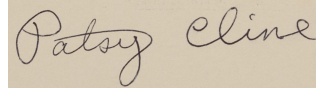
MCCALL

Yes it is, Patsy. Become a country star and I'll double the royalty.

PATSY

Fair enough. But Hoss, you can get started on the new paperwork.

McCall grins, likes the attitude. We go CLOSE ON Patsy signing the contract--



Everybody shakes hands. Bill Peer's all excited.

BILL

She's gonna make you a lot of money.

MCCALL

I count on it. Now, how 'bout some dinner?

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER

Patsy, Gerald, Bill, and McCall are having a grand ol' time. Steaks have been eaten. Whiskeys have been had (*except by Bill*). War stories recounted. McCall's talking a mile a minute.

MCCALL

...I want you to go anywhere and everywhere. People need to know your face, hear your voice. And then we're going to Nashville to record some songs. I already spoke with Paul Cohen about it. He's the head of A&R at Decca's Country Division. How does that sound?

PATSY

Hoss, you already have my name in ink. Let's get this show on the road.

INT. COMMERCIAL PLANE - DAY

JANUARY 2, 1955. Patsy's smiling ear-to-ear. Next to her, Bill. And Bill's terrified. He holds on to the armrests for dear life, his face white as a ghost.

BILL

How come you ain't nervous?

PATSY
What's there to be nervous of?

BILL
Planes don't make no sense. Think I'm
about to wet my pants!

Patsy pulls out a flask -

PATSY
Let's have a couple of swigs.

BILL
You know I don't drink.

PATSY
There's a first time for ev'rythin'.
And you ask me, it beats the hell
outta pissin' your pants.

Bill looks at the flask. Patsy wiggles it--

PATSY
C'mon Bill, let's get juggin' and
jawin'. It'll be fun.

Fuck it. Bill grabs the flask and drinks a healthy dose.

LATER

Patsy and Bill are sailing the friendly skies. Drunk as skunks.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT (P.A.)
Ladies and gentlemen, we're approaching
Nashville and the captain has turned on
the 'fasten seat belts' sign.

Out of nowhere, Patsy jumps into the aisle, straddles her
legs across it, and YELLS, putting on a show--

PATSY
A'right ladies, you don't want to ignore
the captain. Fas'en your sanitary belts.

At first silence, then everybody breaks out laughing. Except
the FLIGHT ATTENDANT, who's not in the mood.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT
Madam!

Please take your seat.

Patsy ignores, jets past her.

PATSY
Hey, watch what you call me!

FLIGHT ATTENDANT
Where are you going now?

PATSY
To help the captain land this bird.

She knocks insistently on the Captain's cabin -

PATSY
Captain! Hey Captain, open up. The
Cline's here to teach ya a few tricks.

FLIGHT
Madam, if you don't sit down, I'm
gonna have to restrain you.

Patsy turns to her with a deadly look.

PATSY
Call me *madam* one more time. Go on -

The Attendant cowers. Bill's drunk but manages to be sensible.
Swoops in and scoops Patsy. As he drags her back to her seat--

PATSY
Don't be a buzz-kill Bill. *Hah*, 'kill
Bill'. Rhymes and ev'rythin'. Maybe it's
a song. Whaddya say Bill, is it a song?

INT. DECCA STUDIOS - RECORDING BOOTH/CONTROL ROOM - DAY

JANUARY 5, 1955. Patsy's singing I CRIED ALL THE WAY TO THE ALTAR, showcasing her natural voice and her hiccup growl/yodel on the high notes. Notably, she has her hair in CURLERS.

PAUL COHEN (47; Decca Exec), McCall, Bill Peer, and a SOUND ENGINEER are in the CONTROL ROOM. Cohen keeps a poker face, but Bill seems pleased with how the recording's going.

Not Patsy though, who keeps giving the DRUMMER the side eye. Clocking his tempo. After a few measures, she abruptly stops.

PATSY
Goddamn it, can't you guys ever get
the beat right? Bill, do something.
They're awful.

DRUMMER
Hey, who do you think you are?

PATSY
The only person in here who gives a
good goddamn.

DRUMMER

Oh, you're mighty bushy-tailed for a beginner.

Bill makes a move to go intervene, but Cohen stops him.

PAUL COHEN

Let's see where this goes.

Patsy stands her own -

PATSY

Look Hoss, you're half-assin' it, and I don't do half-assed.

DRUMMER

Ain't me who came to a recording session in curlers.

PATSY

What of it?

DRUMMER

Ain't professional. And more, it's disrespectful.

PATSY

Why don't you worry about your playin' instead of my looks? Now, I'm singin' the way I'm supposed to, but you boys ain't keepin' up. In my book that means half-assin', and I don't--

DRUMMER

--do half-assed, yeah I heard ya 'fore. What do you want from us? We're keeping the beat that's on the sheet.

PATSY

Ain't good enough.

DRUMMER

Okay. Then tell us what is.

PATSY

Thought you'd never ask.
(to everyone; w/ a smirk)
Follow my lead fellas, Imma take you to the Promised Land.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE THE STUDIO - LATER

Patsy's walking on air. Arm wrapped around Bill's.

PATSY

Oh Bill, it's finally happenin'. I'm beginnin' to realize my dream!

BILL

We're doin' it, honey. One step at a time, but we're doin' it.

Patsy's bursting with emotions. She grabs Bill and kisses him like he's never been kissed before.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER

Bill's on the phone. Patsy's on the bed, putting together a **SCRAPBOOK**. The first entry reads: "*January 5, 1955 - First Recording at Decca*". Then she turns the book and pastes the photo of a very young ELVIS PRESLEY on the last page. We catch Bill's final moments on the call -

BILL

...I understand. No, it's okay Paul.

He hangs up and turns to Patsy. With a heavy look--

BILL

Bad news, Patsy. Cohen's not happy with the recordings. He's gonna shelve 'em.

We STAY ON Patsy. Stone-faced. Then, in a jiff, she closes the scrapbook, gets up, and grabs her suitcase.

PATSY

What are we waitin' for? Let's go home, we've got work to do.

INT. G&H MUSIC STORE - WINCHESTER - ANOTHER DAY

Patsy's pestering a STORE OWNER (50s) about a MAGNETIC TAPE.

PATSY

Now, this here tape, how does it impact the quality of the recording?

STORE OWNER

For starters, it captures a broader range of frequencies, which gives ya more accurate recordings. Then there's the reduced noise...

As the Owner continues to patiently explaining -

PATSY (V.O.)
 I was hell bent on learnin', on gettin'
 better, on convincin' ev'ryone I had
 what it took. Then I went into a booth
 and gave myself a pop quiz.

CUT TO: Patsy's at the RECORDING BOOTH, singing her heart out.

CUT TO: Patsy and Store Owner listen to the recording Patsy just made. Patsy takes notes as the Owner gives her pointers.

STORE OWNER
 You're getting distortion 'cause you're
 too close to the mike. You have great
 projection, but you need to control it
 better. And Patsy, don't forget to
 breathe. You're going through the song
 like a freight train.

CUT TO: Patsy's back at the recording booth, and this time she adjusts her position in relation to the mike. She also catches herself not breathing.

PATSY (V.O.)
 I did it again and again -

CUT TO: Patsy listens to the new recording with the Owner. It's better, but not there yet. Patsy goes back to the booth... RINSE/REPEAT.

INT. DECCA STUDIOS - RECORDING BOOTH/CONTROL ROOM

Patsy's singing A CHURCH, A COURTROOM, THEN GOODBYE, and this time she's killing it. Even Paul Cohen breaks his usual poker and lets a satisfied grin slip.

INT. BILL MCCALL'S OFFICE - DAY

JULY 20, 1955. We're CLOSE ON an EP with Patsy's face called "SONGS BY PATSY CLINE". Patsy couldn't be prouder -

PATSY
 Now this is what a real record looks
 like!

McCall and Bill share a conspiratorial look.

MCCALL
 Go on Bill, give her the letter.

'The letter?' says Patsy's look as Bill hands it over.

MCCALL

We've been working on that. It's going to all the DJs in town.

PATSY

(reading aloud)

Patsy Cline sings better than any female vocalist we have heard. Her diction, sense of timing, and phrasings are exceptionally good. We hope you will agree and give her first record a chance to be heard.

(impressed)

Well, you sold me Hoss. But do you think it'll sell the others?

BILL

There's no question about it. You're goin' on the radio and I reckon that'll take us all the way to the Opry.

PATSY

The Opry? Well, wouldn't that be somethin' -

INT. RYMAN AUDITORIUM - MONTHS LATER

A crowded house powering an electric energy. ERNEST TUBB (51), all smiles, leans into the mic -

TUBB

Here's a little lady with a powerful voice. I've been predicting big things for her. Make welcome Miss Patsy Cline, singing her debut recording, *A Church, A Courtroom, Then Goodbye*.

Patsy comes on stage. The stage she's been wanting to step into for years. The stage that's facing 2000 butts on seats. The stage reserved for real country singers. Patsy never gets nervous, but she sure is nervous now.

The room falls silent. Which becomes deafening. Sparking a--

FLASH - Young Patsy (14) practices her singing in front of the mirror. Behind her, Sam watches, bottle in hand. An intense, unnerving look in his eyes. Patsy jolts when she sees him. Then cowers, retreating into herself, her heart exploding out of her chest.

Rumbles of impatience from the crowd bring Patsy back. She looks to the side, to Bill, who gives her an encouraging nod.

PATSY

C'mon Cline, get it together.

Patsy clears her throat and then starts singing...

*The first scene was the church, then
the altar / Where we claimed each
other, with tears of joy we cried*

There's a glimpse of how her voice can entrance audiences, but Patsy, the performer, has a long way to go. She's tense, stands very still, and doesn't engage the crowd.

When she's done, the response is tepid. Bill claps effusively, proud anyway. Tubb rushes on stage, trying to rile the crowd--

TUBB

Folks, Miss Patsy Cline! Isn't she terrific?

Still, Patsy gets only scattered applause. Which doesn't bother her. She gleefully runs off stage and into Bill's arms.

PATSY

Oh Bill, I don't care what they think.
Appearin' on the Opry's a dream come true.
You made me the happiest gal in the world.

INT. PATSY & GERALD'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - ANOTHER DAY

Bill and Patsy are butt naked and in the throes of passion. Patsy's working Bill and working him hard.

BILL

Goddamn Pats, there's no slack in your rope.

PATSY

Ain't my first rodeo, Hoss. Hold on, I'm puttin' the second gear.

She goes faster and Bill starts breathing like he's about to have a heart attack. Outside, a car door SLAMS. Loud enough to freak out Patsy, who suddenly stops and climbs off Bill. She rushes to window and sees--

A sweaty Gerald, loosening his tie, walking into the building.

PATSY

Shit, it's the big fella. Where's your car?

BILL

Two streets over. Like always.

PATSY

I doubt he's seen it then.

(Bill's still there)

Watchya doin' Hoss, waitin' to roll
him the red carpet? C'mon, hide!

In a hurry, Bill fumbles to grab his clothes and runs into the closet.

PATSY

Not there. Under the bed!

Bill does as he's told. Patsy makes the bed the best she can, then drops to her knees and tells Bill--

PATSY

At some point, Gerald's gonna head to
the fridge for a beer. That's when you
get the hell outta here.

A panicky Bill nods. The front door creaks open -

GERALD (O.S.)

Surprise baby, I'm home.

Patsy looks around, making sure there's no evidence for Gerald to uncover. When he walks into the room, Patsy welcomes him with a big, plastic smile. Tapping into her nervous energy, he casts an eyeball to the place...

PATSY

Lookin' for your dignity, big fella?
Ain't gonna find it 'round here.

GERALD

Hah! Missed you too, baby.

That's when Patsy notices-- half of Bill's tie visible at the foot of the headboard. Gerald sits on the bed. The tie just inches away...

PATSY

There's cold beer in the fridge.

Using a handkerchief to soak up the sweat on his forehead -

GERALD

Wanna get me one?

PATSY

Why don't you get it yourself?

GERALD

Nah. I think I'll just lay here 'till
I cool off.

As he flops down on the bed, Bill snags the tie.

GERALD

By the way, guess who I spotted in
Bill's car while I was driving 'round
town last night?

PATSY

I give up.

GERALD

You.

PATSY

You must be seein' things. I was at
Connie's.

GERALD

You really must think I'm an idiot.

PATSY

Sometimes I really do, Gerald.

GERALD

Huh! Okay baby, you think about that
while I get some shut eye.

Patsy watches nervously. Under the bed, Bill sweats. Gerald
lays back and, after a few beats, *dozes off*. Patsy signals
frantically to Bill, who crawls from under the bed and tip-
toes to the door. Then he runs the hell out of there -
hitting the creaky floors - making noise - waking up Gerald--

GERALD

What the hell was that?

But he's sleep-silly and quickly drifts back into dreamland.

INT. CONNIE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - ANOTHER DAY

Patsy and Connie have beers and a big plate of fried chicken.

PATSY

...not even a fart in the face would've
gotten Gerald out of that bed.

(cackles)

Bill got real scared too, I doubt he'll
go back to the apartment.

(MORE)

PATSY (cont'd)

But that's okay, I have my eye on that hunk with the broad shoulders from the mini-mart.

(noticing)

What's wrong, Connie?

CONNIE

Well Pat, you're always talkin' about your music and your career, but all I hear is *hims-hims-hims* and this ain't church. If you wanna sing, you should go ahead and sing.

This gets Patsy's wheels turning.

INT. MOOSE LOUNGE - BEFORE OPENING HOURS

Patsy's behind the mike, trying out a few new pitches for [A POOR MAN'S ROSES](#). Modulating her voice, working on her stage moves. That's when Bill walks in all excited -

BILL

Pats. Pats! I've got great news.

PATSY

You got me on the Opry again?

BILL

Better.

PATSY

Better than the Opry?

BILL

The paperwork came through. Jenny and I are officially divorced.

PATSY

...oh.

BILL

What's wrong? I thought you'd be happy.

PATSY

There ain't no right way of sayin' this, so I'm just gonna come out and say it-- I'm leavin' ya, Bill.

Bill was never sucker-punched in his life, but if he were to describe it, he'd say it feels exactly like this.

BILL

You what!?

PATSY
Ain't nothin' I love more than my
music.

BILL
(exasperated)
And I'm helpin' you with it.

PATSY
Face it, you wanna get married and I
wanna become a star.

BILL
We can do both.

PATSY
Sorry, Bill. My mind's made up.

The news hasn't quite hit Bill yet. When it does, he'll be devastated. But our focus is on Patsy, and she's already heading out the door. There's something else to take care of.

INT. PATSY & GERALD'S APARTMENT - ANOTHER DAY

From a far, we see Patsy delivering the bad news to Gerald. He pleads and pleads, but Patsy's out of there.

PATSY (V.O.)
I had to ship Gerald too. I tell ya,
if love is blind, marriage is an eye-
opener. But I didn't divorce the big
fella right away. I was afraid he'd
put a pistol to his mouth if I did.

INT./EXT. PATSY & GERALD'S APARTMENT - LATER

A bitter Gerald, nursing a bottle of whiskey, watches Connie help Patsy put her bags in the car and drive off.

PATSY (V.O.)
I just moved out and went on and
focused on my career. On gettin' seen.
On gettin' heard. Like I said I would.
Like McCall wan'ed me to -

PATSY ON TOUR - NEXT FEW MONTHS

COUNTRY FESTIVALS & STATE FAIRS - SEVERAL SHOTS

Patsy fronts the KOUNTRY KRACKERS, singing standards all over the Southeastern area. Her stage presence gets stronger -

She moves more purposefully, starts interacting with the crowd, and hones in on her growls and yodels.

PATSY (V.O.)

I sang across three states, but that don't mean I had a career. I was singin' songs McCall had in his catalogue. Songs bigger singers than I were already famous for.

WRESTLING ARENA

Patsy's in the middle of the RING performing LOVESICK BLUES in front of TV cameras.

PATSY (V.O.)

Still, McCall sent me to D.C. to be a regular on "Town and Country Time." It was a local show, but it sat 4000 butts at a wrestling arena, which was enough to give me a taste of fame. I sure liked that, tasted sweeter than stolen honey.

MAGAZINE STAND

A FAN picks up the WASHINGTON STAR. Patsy's on the cover. The title reads: "The Hillbilly With Oomph"

TOWN AND COUNTRY BACKSTAGE BACKSTAGE

Patsy's confidence is sky high as she flirts with a big, handsome CANADIAN MOUNTIE.

TOWN AND COUNTRY BACKSTAGE - THE NEXT DAY

"THE GIRLS" (as the other regulars were known), hang on Patsy's every word, getting access to a world they're too innocent for.

PATSY

...I saw a Canadian Mountie and tol' myself - *'that's a big, good-lookin' son of a bitch. I'm screwing the boots off him tonight.'* And guess what I did?

ONE OF THE GIRLS

You screwed the boots off him.

Patsy's look says it all. The Girls giggle like schoolgirls, riveted and scandalized. Patsy laps up the attention.

DINER

Patsy stuffs herself with a bloody cheeseburger and a fatty milkshake. The Girls watch in disbelief. In jealousy, too.

MOTEL

Patsy inspects her body in the mirror. Zeroes in on a growing waistline and HATES it. Suddenly worried, she turns the room upside down until she finds her OBETROL (these are DIET PILLS).

MERCH TABLE

Patsy herself grinds to sell EPs for 80 cents and HEAD HOTS for 25. She's dispirited, business is slow.

PATSY (V.O.)

I was busier than a cow's tail in fly season, but I was only makin' 250 a week.

HENSLEY HOME

Mrs. Hensley is swimming in 'PAST DUE' NOTICES.

PATSY (V.O.)

Which wasn't enough to help mama and the kids and whoever else needed -

CONNIE'S HOUSE

Patsy cuts Connie a check for \$50.

CONNIE

Sorry Pat, my music ain't goin' and--

PATSY

I'll hear none of it. You need somethin', you come to me.

INT. BILL MCCALL'S OFFICE - DAY

Patsy paces as she pleads with Bill.

PATSY (V.O.)

Forced me to go to McCall for an advance on my royalties. Problem was--

MCCALL

You have none. I'm sorry Patsy, but you just aren't selling records and you aren't growing a presence.

PATSY

I made the cover of the Washington Star. People know who I am.

MCCALL

Maybe so, but they don't care enough to buy the EP.

PATSY

Goddamn it, I'm out there singin' what you want me to sing and you're tellin' me it ain't workin'. What do I do now? I need to help mama with her bills.

Bill thinks it over. Leans forward.

MCCALL

I'll give you an advance if you sign
a contract extension. 3 c-notes for
one more year. Take it or leave it.

Patsy doesn't have to do ponder it for long.

PATSY

Hand me a pen, Hoss.

PATSY (V.O.)

I put out that fire, but I also started
feelin' blue about the whole thing, so I
fell back into the love merry-go-round -

INT. MELODY LANE HONKY TONK - NIGHT

FRIDAY, APRIL 13TH, 1956. Patsy's hanging out with her
BANDMATES when she's approached by a strapping young man with
chiseled good looks. Oozing personality and sex appeal.

PATSY (V.O.)

I shoulda known better meetin' a man on
Friday the 13th.

CHARLIE DICK (21) is virile, confident, and hot for Patsy.

CHARLIE

Excuse me Miss Cline, would you like
to dance?

PATSY

Thanks, but I can't dance while I'm
workin'.

Charlie files that for later.

COUPLE OF HOURS LATER

Patsy's on the dance floor with Connie and other COUNTRY
GIRLS. Charlie makes another move.

CHARLIE

Hello Patsy, don't seem like you're
working now. Would you like to dance?

PATSY

I am dancing.

CHARLIE

I meant with me.

PATSY
I know what you meant, Hoss.

CHARLIE
The name's Charlie. Charlie Dick.

PATSY
Nice to meet you, Hoss.

CHARLIE
The name's--

PATSY
Charlie Dick. I heard it. Ev'rybody
and their mothers heard it. But I
call ev'ryone Hoss.

CHARLIE
Call me Charlie.

PATSY
Fine Charlie, have it your way. But
it's against policy to dance with the
customers.

Charlie grins. Enjoying the challenge. As soon as he leaves,
the Girls break into giggles. Patsy locks in on his tight
butt as he walks away. Pleased with what she's seeing.

LATER

Charlie approaches Patsy with a determined look in his eyes.

CHARLIE
How 'bout a drink?

PATSY
Can't drink while I'm workin'...

Even a confident man like Charlie has a breaking point. And
he's about to reach it when Patsy breathes new life into him -

PATSY
But if you'd like to go outside for a
lil' fresh air, that'd be nice.

EXT./INT. MELODY LANE HONKY TONK/CHARLIE'S CAR - LATER

Charlie and Patsy have been here a while, as showcased by
their comfort with one another. Elvis Presley's I WANT YOU, I
NEED YOU, I LOVE YOU comes on the radio and Patsy LIGHTS UP.

PATSY

Oh I love me this young fella. Have you seen what he does with his hips?

CHARLIE

The whole country's seen it.

PATSY

Can you imagine how he uses 'em in bed?

CHARLIE

(laughs)

No, I don't think I can. Or want to. Have you ever seen him perform?

PATSY

Once, at the Opry. The crowd didn't take to him, some even booed. Not me, I loved him right away. Nowadays, whenever I do *Blue Moon of Kentucky*, I do it for him. That's the song he played 'fore comin' offstage in tears.

CHARLIE

Guess he showed 'em in the end.

Charlie drags on a cigarette. Patsy sits up--

PATSY

So Charlie, I hear you're somethin' of a playboy.

CHARLIE

How did you hear that? We just met.

PATSY

People saw you comin' to me and, well, you know how it is - word travels in Winchester...

CHARLIE

Faster than a cat lapping chain lightning, it seems. So what now?

PATSY

Nothin', I was just curious.

CHARLIE

What else were you curious about?

PATSY

Well, I'd like to know what you do for a livin' aside from pickin' up gals at Honky Tonks...

CHARLIE

I'm a linotype operator down at the
Winchester Star.

PATSY

(giving him a look)

So you man the hot presses, *huh?*

CHARLIE

Yes ma'am. Seems like you know a lot
about a lot.

PATSY

You don't know the half of it.

Charlie laughs, taken with her moxie.

CHARLIE

Are you an Winchester gal?

PATSY

By way of a lot o' other places.

CHARLIE

How do you mean?

PATSY

My daddy, he came back from the Great
War with an edge to his temper. The
bottle and his first marriage calmed him
down, but he didn't win any lotteries in
life, if ya know what I mean. He lost
his pregnant wife in a car crash and
then those fellas in Wall Street wiped
out his inheritance. Not that you'd know
it. The son of a bitch kept spending on
flashy cars and ritzy homes. By the time
I was old enough to remember things, I
remember us movin' from one big,
abandoned house to the next, just
waitin' for the eviction notices to roll
in. All in all, we moved 19 times. When
I turned 15, daddy hit the road and Mama
and I decided 'twas time to stay put.

CHARLIE

What a pair we are. Your daddy
leaves, mine blows his brains out.

PATSY

My God Charlie, that's horrible. Why
did he do it?

CHARLIE

No idea. I was in bed with my brothers when I heard the shot. Went into the kitchen, found a .22 on his hand and his brains on the floor. Worst part fell on mama, who had to clean 'em up the next morning before breakfast.

For the first time in her life, Patsy doesn't know what to say. But Charlie isn't looking for pity. He just kinda said it.

CHARLIE

Hell, 'twas for the best. Gave me what I needed to finally leave that shithole.

PATSY

Seems like we both had to do a whole lot of growin' very fast.

CHARLIE

Seems that way. And what do you plan on doin' with whole that growin'?

PATSY

I'm gonna get myself a music career, some kids, and a big ol' house. My dream house. The house that Vegas built. What about you?

CHARLIE

Well, first I'm gonna get myself a Patsy Cline, and then I'm gonna get all those things alongside her. Hell, I'm gonna get all those things for her.

PATSY

You're a sweet talker, ain't ya?

CHARLIE

If the truth is sweet, then that's what I am.

Patsy gets closer to Charlie, starts rubbing his arm.

PATSY

Tell me Charlie Dick. That last name of yours, does it do some growin' too?

INT. CHARLIE'S BEDROOM - LATER

Charlie leads Patsy to orgasm. When they're done, she climbs off him and rolls over. Looking at the ceiling, catching her breath, Patsy realizes this is as satisfied as she's ever been.

PATSY

Oh Charlie, you're bigger than life
and twice as hard.

CHARLIE

Think I been searchin' for you all my
life and didn't know it.

PATSY

Still plenty of treasures to dig up,
Hoss. But first thing's first -
(climbs back on top of him)
Ready to go again?

Charlie smirks and unleashes a A-WHOOO, as we **CUT TO:**

INT. MELODY LANE HONKY TONK - ANOTHER NIGHT

A celebration of country and community powered by the Kountry
Krackers. Patsy and Charlie dance vigorously. They're
charming, charismatic, and everyone has their eyes on them.

When the song's done, the Krackers take a break. Patsy and
Charlie sit at a table, catching their breaths. Charlie
motions to a WAITRESS for a round of drinks.

PATSY

I like ya Charlie Dick, you're like a
hurricane in pants.

CHARLIE

You're also quite the storm, Patsy.

PATSY

Watch out Winchester, there's a new duo
in town.

CHARLIE

The Outlaw and the Cowgirl.

PATSY

Hah. I like that, Hoss.

CHARLIE

There you go again with the Hoss.

A WAITRESS brings them a round of drinks.

CHARLIE

Thanks darlin'.

Patsy's gaze is on the stage. Dreaming about it--

PATSY

Ya know Charlie, I like dancin', but
I looove singin'.

CHARLIE

You're really serious about your
music, ain't ya?

PATSY

Oh yeah. I 'member havin' stars shinin'
in my eyes when I first saw Shirley
Temple dance in a movie. I was 2, maybe
3. Went home that night and started tap
dancin' and didn't stop until mama put
me in a competition. Soon as I won it, I
got bored of dancin' and quit. When I
was 7, my parents bought me a lil' piano
and some lessons. Teacher said I had a
gift. And what do I do? I go 'n' quit
after 2 weeks.

(she leans in)

But when I started singin', Charlie, I
knew straight away there wouldn't be any
quittin'. You know why? 'Cause when I
sing, I know I'm doin' what the good
Lord put me on his green Earth to do.
When somethin's bigger than you, you
don't have a choice, you just do it.

CHARLIE

You know it's a hard business-- long
hours, cramped jalopies with sweaty,
fartin' men, roach-roamin' motels
with broken beds...

PATSY

I know.

CHARLIE

And that house of yours - *the one Vegas
built* - that ain't gonna come easy.

PATSY

I know.

CHARLIE

And kids--

PATSY

Charlie, I know.

CHARLIE

That's right, I forgot you know a lot about a lot. Well, do you know about my musical ear too?

PATSY

What about your musical ear?

CHARLIE

It's special. Like a golden receiver.

PATSY

You sure you don't mean golden retriever?

Patsy laughs at her own joke.

CHARLIE

Laugh all ya want, but I'd keep me around if I were you.

PATSY

Maybe I will, Charlie. Maybe I will...

INT. BILL MCCALL'S OFFICE - DAY

JULY 2, 1956. McCall's giving Patsy the lay of the land as lyricist **DON HECHT (26)** sits on the sofa, chain-smoking.

MCCALL

Patsy, we're not selling records.

PATSY

I know, 'cause I ain't gettin' checks.

MCCALL

And why do you think that is?

PATSY

It ain't my voice, I can tell you that much.

MCCALL

You're right. But you're not using it properly.

PATSY

What do you mean?

MCCALL

You're not a country singer, Patsy.

PATSY
 (offended to her core)
Of course I'm a country singer.

MCCALL
 You can sing country, but you ain't
 becomin' a country star. And that's a
 hard pill you'll have to swallow.

PATSY
 Okay, let's say I swallow it. Then what?

MCCALL
 You've got the same tear in your voice
 that Don Hecht here has in his writing.

Patsy gives Don an examining look. He drags on his cigarette.

MCCALL
 He has a song for you.

PATSY
 What's the title?

MCCALL
Walkin' After Midnight.

PATSY
 I don't like it. Title stinks.

MCCALL
 Go on Don, give it a spin.

Don gets up and places a 45 on the record player. The song as
 sang by KAY STARR plays for a few measures. Patsy stops it.

PATSY
 I hate it. I won't do it.

McCall's getting fed up -

MCCALL
 You'll do what I want you to do. I've
 spent a fortune on you and have
 nothing to show for it.

PATSY
 But it doesn't have any balls. It's
 just a lil' ole pop song.

DON HECHT
 And you're nothing but a pop singer
 who lives in country.

PATSY
Look Mr. Heck--

DON HECHT

It's pronounced *Hecht*, like
Hector without the O.R.

PATSY
Here's the thing Mr. Hector without
the O.R. - for 2 years I've sung what
other people wan'ed me to sing and
when it flops I get the blame. Me! It
ain't fair.

MCCALL
Who ever blamed you, Patsy? We just
didn't get a hit yet, that's all.

Don lets Patsy stew for a beat. Then tries a gentler approach.

DON HECHT
Your voice is pure B-flat blues and
this song was made for someone like
you. Just try it. And maybe McCall will
let you pick the B-side.

--he says, glancing at McCall, who gives them a '*sure, why
the hell not*' type of nod. But Patsy's not sold yet. Don
walks up to her and looks her square in the eyes -

DON HECHT
Patsy, you have a style that will change
country music forever. I know it.

PATSY
You don't know shit from Shinola, but
I'll do this just to prove you wrong.

McCall's rubs his hands, satisfied.

MCCALL
So we're all set.

PATSY
How about a couple of hundred bucks
for the road?

MCCALL
How about a two-year extension? In
case I'm right and the song hits...

PATSY
That ties me 'till '58. I don't like
being tied.

MCCALL
You wan' the bills, you gotta sign on
the dotted line.

Off Patsy, chewing on it, we **CUT TO:**

INT. DECCA STUDIOS - RECORDING BOOTH/CONTROL ROOM - ANOTHER DAY

Patsy and the BACKING BAND get ready to go. Charlie's in the control room, beer in hand, charming everyone. Present are also McCall and Paul Cohen, who tells everyone to--

PAUL COHEN
Shut the hell up!

They begin. Patsy and the band take *Walkin' After Midnight* at a slower tempo than the recording we know today. They play it straight country, beginning with DIN HELMS's opening riff. Patsy stays on top of the beat, trying for a driving style, but she's not pulling it off and stops singing. Paul goes to speak, but McCall gestures that he's got it -

MCCALL
What's the matter, Patsy?

PATSY
I can't stand this song. It's awful.

MCCALL
We have a deal.

PATSY
Screw you and screw our *goddamn* deal.

MCCALL
I guess you're not interested in the
Arthur Godfrey show then...

Patsy does a double take.

MCCALL
That's right Patsy, you're in.

Patsy lights up, elated. She wants this so bad.

PATSY
You're serious?

MCCALL
As a heart attack. But you gotta do this
song first.

PATSY
 Okay okay, let's get this over with.
 (to herself; thrilled)
Hot damn, the Arthur Godfrey show.

Patsy chuckles and they go again, her whole attitude shifting.

PATSY (V.O.)
 The Arthur Godfrey show was where
 talent went to be discovered. It had
 a combined radio-TV audience of 82
 million people. 82 million, Hoss! I
 was ready to *hallelujah* the county.

INSERT - TV SHOW OPENING

We HEAR whistling. Then a glass of lemonade comes into view.
 SINGING FEMALE VOICES introduce a series of Lipton products
 and then we **DISSOLVE TO:**

INT. CBS RADIO STUDIOS - PREP ROOM - ANOTHER DAY

JAN 21, 1957. The audience stirs with excitement. ARTHUR
 GODFREY (53; casual; humble) takes center stage.

ARTHUR GODFREY
 And here, through your kindness, Miss
 Patsy Cline -

TV CAMERA PANS to Patsy, dressed to the nines with a stunning
 cocktail dress. She's shaking in her boots.

Mrs. Hensley, who's also nervous as a hen, sits next to
 Arthur and sends her telepathic encouragement.

And still, Patsy FREEZES. And when she does, she gets a--

FLASH - *Young Patsy (14) lays in her bed, reading the back of
 one of her country records. Sam walks in with a look in his
 eyes. Closes the door behind him.*

Patsy shakes it off. She was born for this moment. This is
 her big break and she's determined to take it.

Patsy begins to sing *Walkin'* backed by a big band and
 quickly anyone who knows anything about music notices her
 natural sense of pitch, her ability to vault octaves with
 ease, her unreal reverb... And those who don't are just
intuitively drawn to the journey Patsy takes them on --

VARIOUS SHOTS of the audience to prove it. On the edge of
 their seats. Wanting to be close to Patsy, to her words.

CUT TO WINCHESTER: Charlie, Connie, and Patsy's friends and family watch her on TV. Bursting with pride. Cheering her on.

BACK TO STUDIO: *Walkin's* final bars. When the song's over, there's an eternity of applause.

CLOSE ON: a CLAP-O-METER, registering it. It goes from 0 to 100 C.P.M. For Patsy, it reads 90 C.P.M.

This moment is everything Patsy's ever dreamed of. Mrs. Hensley's eyes beam with pride and joy. She tries hard - and fails - to avoid tears on national television.

CUT TO WINCHESTER: Charlie grabs Connie, he's BEAMING. They dance around the living room. Champagne POPS.

BACK TO STUDIO: The response is overwhelming and it doesn't seem to stop. Patsy's over the moon. Arthur approaches--

ARTHUR GODFREY

You are the most innocent, most nervous,
most truthful and honest performer I've
ever seen. There's surely stardust on
you, Patsy Cline!

CLOSE ON Patsy, beaming!

CUT TO PATSY'S SCRAPBOOK: *"Went on the Godfrey show. Won!!"*

PATSY (V.O.)

After that, I took off, Hoss. Like a
rocket ship -

CUE Elvis Presley's GOT A LOT O'LIVIN' TO DO and **CUT TO:**

PATSY'S FAME GOING UP UP UP

CBS MAIL ROOM

Letters pouring in, clamoring for copies of *Walkin'*.

MUSIC SHOPS / MUSIC CHARTS - VARIOUS

FANS buy the *Walkin'* single in droves. Throughout this MONTAGE, we'll see the song CLIMBING THE CHARTS, outselling The Platters, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Bill Haley, peaking at number 12 in POP and Number 2 in COUNTRY.

ARTHUR GODFREY SHOW - VARIOUS

Patsy becomes a regular. We see check after check being cut. \$1000 each. Patsy's eyes go KA-CHING!

RITZY NIGHTCLUB

Patsy and Charlie dance and drink champagne.

Can't keep their hands off each other. Together, they're electrifying, a force to be reckoned with. Clinking glasses -

CHARLIE
Here's to you, cowgirl.

PATSY
Right back atcha, outlaw.

TV STUDIO - VARIOUS

Patsy does SPECIAL GUEST spots on Bob Crosby's Variety Show; the Alan Freed Show; the Western Ranch Party with Tex Ritter.

BATHROOM / ON THE ROAD / DINER / BACKSTAGE - VARIOUS

Patsy goes on a diet, starts popping more and more diet pills.

WINC RADIO STATION / MCCALL'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Radio DJs start picking up COVERS of Walkin', namely--

JOLTIN' JACK
That was Calvin Coolidge singing Patsy Cline. Was it better or worse? Let's go to the phones and find out. Go ahead caller, you're on -

McCall, chewing on a cigar, isn't about to let this slide.

MCCALL
I don't like being sold a crystal and told it's a diamond. There's nothing like a Patsy Cline record, so let's just hear some Patsy Cline.

FITTING ROOMS - VARIOUS

Patsy starts dressing differently. With tight-fitting dresses and spike heels.

RESTAURANT

Patsy finalizes the DIVORCE with Gerald and celebrates with plenty of champagne alongside Charlie and Connie.

SPECIALTY BOUTIQUE

Patsy and Connie are out shopping. Connie can't afford anything, but Patsy puts a few dresses on her tab.

MOOSE LOUNGE

Patsy and Charlie watch Bill Peer and the Melody Boys. When the band takes a break, Bill sees Patsy and they exchange a long look. It's broken up by Bill's new wife, who gives him a big wet one. Patsy smiles, happy for him.

POOL HALL

Charlie keeps LOSING MONEY on a pool game.

RECORDING STUDIO - VARIOUS

Patsy records more songs.

Charlie's in every session, always with a drink in hand, entranced by her voice, and occasionally giving her notes.

MUSIC SHOP

A CLERK cuts open a box with copies of Patsy's first studio album, self-titled PATSY CLINE. He displays it on the window and reverses the "CLOSED" sign. FAN after FAN walks in and snags a copy.

PATSY'S SCRAPBOOK

Getting fuller and fuller with newspaper clippings, diary entries, and photos...

PATSY'S KITCHEN & LIVING ROOM

Wearing an apron and a pleased smile, Patsy serves a big dinner to Charlie, Mrs. Hensley, Connie and friends. They're all cramped up in a small living room. Charlie's at the head of the table, already well-toasted. Patsy sits on his lap.

PATSY

Ain't life grand, Charlie Dick?

CHARLIE

Nothin' makes me happier than havin' you at home, cookin' up a storm. We should do more of it.

PATSY

We should. Only, don't ya think it's time we do it in a bigger house?

BRICK HOUSE

Patsy and Charlie move in into a two-story BRICK HOUSE. Smiles all around. This is a good time in their lives.

BACKSTAGE - VARIOUS

Patsy's hugged, kissed, congratulated, given flowers. *It's Patsy's world and everybody else just lives in it.*

EXT./INT. COUNTRY ROAD/PATSY'S CADILLAC - DAY

The quiet contrast to the previous ecstasy. Patsy drives by herself. Deep in thought. No music, no nothing. Just the sound of the engine revving up a dirt road.

PATSY (V.O.)

It was a whirlwind, Hoss, and it made me eager to live life in a new way.

PATSY'S ASSAULTED BY ANOTHER FLASH - Young Patsy (14) laying in bed. Wearing nothing but her underwear. Sucking on her teeth, conflicted. A SHADOW ENGULFING HER...

PATSY (V.O.)
But before I could do that, I had to
close a chapter from my past -

As the Cadillac drives over a hill, a HOSPITAL comes into view.

INT. VETERAN'S HOSPITAL - ROOM - LATER

Patsy walks into a room that smells like death. On the bed, Sam, as frail as Patsy was when she had the bout with rheumatic fever. Patsy stops to take in this image. Sam senses someone in the room -

SAM
W-who's there?

PATSY
It's me daddy. It's Ginny.

SAM
G-ginny? I never thought I'd--

PATSY
Neither did I. But I figured I'd look
ya in the eye one last time, see if I
find anythin' worth rememberin'.

Sam says nothing. Patsy sits next to him and there's a moment of silence. Then--

SAM
Heard ya on the radio the other day.
You have a voice on you lil' girl.

PATSY
That I do, daddy. It's the only thing
you gave me worth any damn.

SAM
...I know. Listen, I've been doin' a
lot of thinkin'--

PATSY
You can stop right there. We're way
past the thinkin' and the regrettin'.

Patsy's consumed by emotions, by all the things she's been wanting to say. Instead--

PATSY
You're a world class son of a bitch,
daddy. But I came here to forgive
you. I wan' you to go in peace.

Sam squeezes Patsy's hand. She squeezes it back. And then she starts softly - even lovingly - singing LIFE'S RAILWAY TO HEAVEN to him. Sam looks ahead, thinking back on his life, his family, his decisions. And then he starts crying. Patsy carries on, secure, vindicated, free...

PATSY (V.O.)

Finally, a new chapter could begin -

EXT. PATSY & CHARLIE'S BRICK HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

SEPTEMBER, 1957. A WEDDING CEREMONY on a beautiful day. Present are aunts, uncles, cousins, D.C. musicians, Mrs. Hensley, Connie, CONNIE'S HUSBAND, and Patsy's now grown siblings, Sam Jr. & Sylvia Mae. About 70 people all around.

PATSY (V.O.)

That's right, Hoss. I got hitched again.
Can you blame me? Look at Charlie. He's
all man. The only one in my life.

Patsy wears a two-piece pink knit-suit, heels with a paisley print, pearl earrings, an inverted bowl hat with ostrich feathers, and an orchid corsage.

Sam Jr. walks Patsy down the aisle and gives her away to an expectant Charlie, who's in a beige suit with a colorful tie and suede shoes. The Priest does his spiel and Patsy and Charlie kiss, sealing their union. Everybody CHEERS and throws rice as we **CUT TO:**

IMAGERY OF THE WEDDING RECEPTION - LATER

VARIOUS SHOTS of Patsy and Charlie, happy... pounding drinks... partying with guests... digging into fried foods. Charlie has a cigarette hanging from his fingers the whole day. On a table, two big bowls of PUNCH. One "FOR THE DICKS" and the other "FOR THE HENSLEYS". Connie walks up to Charlie's BROTHER, who's pouring himself a cup from the Dick bowl.

CONNIE

Why the different bowls?

CHARLIE'S BROTHER

This one doesn't have any alcohol.
Nobody in the Dick family drinks.
'Cept for Charlie of course, who does
the drinkin' for all of us -

He points to Charlie, who's knocking back a beer in one go, his FRIENDS cheering him on.

CHARLIE'S BROTHER

That man adores you, Patsy, but be careful... he wasn't really born, he was squeezed out of a bartender's rag.

Patsy's not worried, she knows a thing or two about those types.

INT. PATSY & CHARLIE'S BRICK HOUSE - BEDROOM - LATER

Patsy and Charlie, wearing their wedding outfits, are in the throes of passion. *It's hot - it's heavy - it's lustful.*

PATSY (V.O.)

Charlie satisfied all my wanton desires. Yessir, there was quite a bit of life in my man.

INT. PATSY & CHARLIE'S BRICK HOUSE - KITCHEN - WEEKS LATER

Patsy and Charlie are in a heated argument. Charlie's sitting at the kitchen table holding a beer. Several empty cans sit on the table.

PATSY (V.O.)

But our love was complicated. When there's so much passion between two people, things can get out of hand -

PATSY

How many times do I have to tell ya, my music comes first.

CHARLIE

You're a wife now. You have responsibilities and I want you to fulfill 'em.

PATSY

You've seen me do it. It ain't hard. Just pick up a pan and throw the steak in it.

CHARLIE GETS UP AND STRIKES PATSY.

CHARLIE

Don't talk back to me.

PATSY STRIKES HIM RIGHT BACK.

PATSY

You don't tell me what to do.

They get into a real scuffle. *Pushing - shoving - slapping.* It's brutal. Charlie may be bigger and stronger, but Patsy's scruffier and refuses to let anyone take the best of her.

Charlie throws Patsy on the kitchen table and jumps on top of her. *Locking her down.* They stop for a moment. Out of breath. Looking into each other's eyes. Quickly, the anger turns into lust. Charlie sends everything in the table flying and pulls Patsy up. Patsy unbuckles his belt as we **CUT TO:**

EXT. STATE FAIR / STAGE - ANOTHER DAY

Carnival games, blocks of hay, cows roaming around... Patsy's in the crowd, eating a hot dog, watching Connie sing. Charlie approaches with a beer, tipsy and brewing a mood.

CHARLIE

I don't want you to go up on that stage.

PATSY

I've got to, or I don't get paid.

CHARLIE

Don't worry about that. I can take care of you.

PATSY

Oh yeah, you have a business with Rockefeller I don't know about?

Getting pissed, Charlie forcefully grabs her arm.

CHARLIE

Don't you disrespect me in front of everyone!

PATSY

Get off it, Charlie. You makin' a scene.

PEOPLE around them start paying attention. Charlie squeezes her arm harder. Demands--

CHARLIE

I don't want you in the business. You oughta be home like the other wives.

PATSY

(letting go of him)

Well, I'm not like the other wives, am I?

Applause from the crowd cuts through. Then Connie announces--

CONNIE

Folks, up next we have my friend and the best singer east of Nevada - Ms. Patsy Cline.

The crowd gives her a big hand. Patsy starts walking, but Charlie stops her.

CHARLIE

You'll do as I say.

PATSY

You must be confusin' me with someone who gives a good goddamn about what you say.

And just like that, Charlie pours his beer all over Patsy. Soaking her. Thinking this will do the trick. Patsy smirks -

PATSY

I hope to hell you don't think that's gonna stop me.

Patsy walks up on stage and takes the mic.

PATSY

Hiya folks! Hope you like your singers in a horn-tossin' mood and lookin' like hell with ev'ryone out to lunch.

LAUGHS and WHISTLING from the crowd. Charlie's fuming.

INT. SPECIALTY BOUTIQUE - ANOTHER DAY

Everything is fashionable and expensive. Connie, unusually airy, waits for Patsy, who's in a fitting room.

PATSY (O.S.)

I gotta lay off mama's country ham, or I'll never find pants big enough to fit my caboose.

CONNIE

Get off it Pat, you always look like a million bucks.

Patsy comes out of the fitting room bursting through a pair of cowboy jeans. She can't even close the top button.

PATSY

You were sayin'...

CONNIE

Okay, so you put on a few pounds. You ask me, they agree with you.

PATSY

What's goin' on? You look as happy as a dead pig in the sunshine.

It's as if Patsy gave permission for Connie to smile with her whole body. Connie gets up, full of energy -

CONNIE

I've met me a man.

PATSY

You did? Tell me ev'rythin'.

CONNIE

He plays the steel guitar and ain't half bad. And Patsy, he's a looker.

PATSY

(teasing)

How's his longhorn?

CONNIE

(smiles)

Long.

PATSY

That's my girl.

CONNIE

That ain't all the news fit to print. We decided to partner up and went on a audition for Don Pierce over at Starday.

(bursting with excitement)

He gave us a contract.

PATSY

(lighting up)

Oh Connie, I'm so happy for you.

Patsy gives her a strong, heartfelt hug. Then--

PATSY

Here's what we're gonna do-- I'm gonna buy ya a couple of fancy dresses, and then we're gonna get us some steaks with sizzlin' butter, mashed potatoes, creamed spinach, and gravy.

CONNIE

I like the plan, but-- ain't you worried about the extra pounds??

PATSY

Screw it, I'll lose 'em on the road.

Patsy puts her arm around Connie and takes her to see dresses.

PATSY (V.O.)

We celebrated alright, but don't go poppin' the champagne just yet. Those singles Connie recorded didn't cut the mustard and she went back on the grind. At least that man of hers stayed put. Wish I could say the same 'bout mine -

INT. POOL HALL BACK ROOM - ANOTHER NIGHT

Charlie's several bourbons in, playing POKER with the GUYS. The RIVER CARD is dealt and the scene is set for either a *straight* or a *flush*. POKER PLAYER places a hefty bet.

POKER PLAYER

So how's the wife, Charlie?

CHARLIE

On the road.

A series of FOLDS. Charlie calls. Just the two of them now.

POKER PLAYER

Shouldn't you be takin' care of her instead of bein' here losin' money?

CHARLIE

She can take care of herself. And I ain't losin'.

Charlie shows his cards - a *straight*.

POKER PLAYER

You sure about that?

The Player shows his cards: a *FLUSH*. Charlie gets up in a huff.

CHARLIE

You're a fuckin' cheater!

POKER PLAYER

No chief, I beat you fair 'n' square.

CHARLIE
Like hell you did. I'm not paying a
dime, you double-dealing hick.

They devolve into petty name-calling and puffing their chests.

EXT. POOL HALL - MOMENTS LATER

Charlie gets thrown out. Like trash.

EXT. PATSY & CHARLIE'S BRICK HOUSE - ANOTHER NIGHT

Patsy's TOO MANY SECRETS plays. Patsy, looking beat from the
tour, parks her Cadillac behind a car she doesn't recognize.

INT. PATSY & CHARLIE'S BRICK HOUSE - HALLWAY/LIVING ROOM

Patsy opens the door to the sound of GIGGLING.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)
You're a bad, *bad* man Charlie Dick.

Patsy goes from 0 to 100 in a flash and darts towards the
living room where she finds Charlie and a YOUNG FLOOZY fooling
around on the couch. Charlie's shirtless, belt unbuckled.
She's on top, in her panties. When they notice Patsy, she
already has a VASE in her hands -

CHARLIE
Patsy, honey, hold on a minute.

Patsy throws the vase. *Barely missing them.*

PATSY
You're a son of a bitch, Charlie.

CHARLIE
Goddamn it woman, stop it. I don't ask
what you do on the road.

PATSY
I sing my ass off so I can put food on
our table. That's what I do on the road.

The Floozy rushes to grab her bra and top.

PATSY
Get the fuck out of my home.

Patsy grabs whatever her hand can reach. Finds a LAMP. Throws
it. Hits the Floozy.

FLOOZY

Hey!

Patsy goes after her and *literally* kicks her out. With each kick in the butt, a--

PATSY

Out! Out! Out!

As she rushes out of there, Charlie tries to grab Patsy.

CHARLIE

What's gotten into you!?

PATSY'S HAND FLIES ACROSS HIS FACE.

PATSY

You can get the fuck out too!

CHARLIE

It's my house.

PATSY

Not tonight, it ain't. Tonight, I'm takin' out all the trash.

She chases Charlie out the door and shuts it in his face.

INT. PATSY & CHARLIE'S BRICK HOUSE - BATHROOM - ANOTHER NIGHT

And now, a complete 180. Patsy and Charlie are in the tub, having drinks, all lovey-dovey.

PATSY

You know what I'm in the mood for?

CHARLIE

What's that honey?

PATSY

A cheeseburger. Bloody. Straight from the cow to the grill.

Charlie springs up, water splashing all over the bathroom.

PATSY

Where are you goin'?

CHARLIE

To kill a cow and cook you a fat, juicy burger.

Patsy laughs. Then--

PATSY

Come here.

CHARLIE

What? Don't wan' the burger no more?

PATSY

Just come here.

Charlie leans in and Patsy kisses him. It's a tender, long kiss. And then, out of nowhere, she PULLS HIM INTO THE TUB. Water splashing everywhere again. Amidst laughter -

CHARLIE

Oh honey, there ain't a single soul out there like you. I love ya, and I love ya lots.

PATSY

I love you too, Charlie Dick.

CHARLIE

I wan' you to promise me somethin'. I wan' you to promise our love will never fade. No matter what happens.

PATSY

I promise, Charlie. Our love ain't ever gonna fade.

They kiss softly, and then kiss some more and we **CUT TO:**

INT. DINER - ANOTHER DAY

Patsy's in a sour mood, devouring a cheeseburger and fries. Connie's tired of sitting there in silence.

CONNIE

Okay, 'nuff with your sulkin'. What's the matter?

Patsy puts her burger down.

PATSY

Goddamn it, Connie - I'm pregnant!

CONNIE

(lighting up)

That's wonderful news, Pat.

PATSY

Wonderful? It's terrible!

CONNIE

You've gotta be kiddin'. Everything's going great guns for you.

PATSY

Yeah, here I am comin' off a hit record and I go and get myself knocked up! I won't be able to go on the road or do TV. It's gonna tie me down.

CONNIE

Frothin' at the mouth ain't gonna help any. Just wait and see, life's long and full of salesmanship. You'll change your tune.

PATSY

But it's different now. Before, I was so consumed with singin', I didn't care if I made a livin' or not. With a bun in the oven, that won't slice it.

CONNIE

What about the money from the Arthur Godfrey show?

PATSY

Spent it.

CONNIE

And the royalties from *Walkin'*?

PATSY

(shakes her head)

Connie, I'm so broke I can't afford to pay attention.

CONNIE

I don't understand. The song's a hit. Why ain't you gettin' your due?

Strangely, this is only now clicking for Patsy.

PATSY

That's a good goddamn question.

EXT. PATSY & CHARLIE'S BRICK HOUSE - YARD - ANOTHER DAY

Patsy opens the mailbox and goes through her mail. A letter from 4-STAR RECORDS stands out.

INT. PATSY & CHARLIE'S BRICK HOUSE - KITCHEN - MINUTES LATER

Sitting at the table, Patsy opens the letter. It's long and full of legalese. And at the bottom, a dollar figure with a minus in front of it. Charlie walks in kitchen, beer in hand.

CHARLIE

What's that?

PATSY

Hell if I know. I need a law degree to read it. Here, you try it -

She hands it over. Charlie doesn't fare any better.

CHARLIE

Well, if we can't understand it, I'd say that sumabitch is robbin' you blind.

Patsy gets up in a huff and snags the letter of Charlie's hands.

PATSY

I'm gonna give him a piece of my mind.

INT. BILL MCCALL'S OFFICE - LATER

Patsy's reading through an EXPENSES DOCUMENT. Bill sits on his chair like the fat cat he is.

MCCALL

As you can see, I deducted the expenses and calculated them against your royalties. That's just how it's done.

McCall makes it all sound very reasonable, but Patsy's looking at the expenses and can't quite believe it -

PATSY

Taxis, phone calls, postage stamps, room service, even goddamn office pastries...
how come this ain't provided by you?

MCCALL

I'm not a Salvation Army. I'm runnin' a business.

PATSY

Only thing you're runnin' is a scheme.

MCCALL

Now hold on a minute. Don't forget I'm the reason you have a career in the first place.

PATSY

I didn't. I just don't like it when you piss down my back and tell me it's rainin'. How many dollars and cents do I have comin' my way?

MCCALL

None. In fact, you owe me money.

Patsy goes BERSERK.

PATSY

I owe you money? Did you forget I have the number 2 country song in America?

McCall springs up. Imposing his presence.

MCCALL

You think it's cheap to cut records? I got recording costs, promotion costs, manufacturing costs. I give you the royalties that have been promised. The ones in the contract you signed. You want more royalties, record more hits.

PATSY

(w/ a nasty edge)

Well howdy-doo, how didn't I think about that?

MCCALL

Maybe now you'll start listening to me. If you recall, your first and only hit is the one I had to beg you to record.

There's a pause. Patsy takes a breather. Shifts tone.

PATSY

C'mon McCall, I need money. I have a baby on the way.

MCCALL

So stop giving everyone what you make and start saving some.

Patsy chews on it. McCall relents.

MCCALL

How much do you need to tie you over?

PATSY

Couple hundred would do.

MCCALL

You know the deal - give me another year and I'll advance you the money.

Patsy stares him down, a storm brewing inside. Then--

PATSY

Tell ya what, you can stick the contract extension where the sun don't shine.

As she storms out--

PATSY (V.O.)

After daddy, McCall was the biggest son of a bitch I've ever met. Remember that dinner of ours, after I signed the contract?

INSERT - Patsy, Gerald, Bill Peer, and McCall in the early days, joyful and excited about the future.

PATSY (V.O.)

He paid for that one, but I paid for ev'rythin' else since. When it was all said and done, *Walkin'* was one of the top songs in the country and I made all of 900 goddamn dollars on it.

INT. STATE FAIR - ANOTHER DAY

Patsy stress-eats cotton candy as she paces alongside Don Hecht, who's giving her the lay of the land -

DON HECHT

There's nothing you can do, Patsy. The deductions he's making are immoral, but legal.

They reach a SHOOTING GALLERY. *10 shots for 10 cents*. Patsy trashes the cotton-candy and throws a dime to the STAND WORKER.

PATSY

Is he even makin' money on me?

DON HECHT

A whole lot. McCall realized early on that the real money is in copyrighting.

Patsy takes her first shot - HITS the target.

DON HECHT

He buys songs from down 'n' out writers for 25 or 30 bucks, then hires a pro to doctor 'em and puts his name on it. And get this-- he uses the pseudonym W.S. Stevenson.

Patsy fires another shot - MISSES.

DON HECHT

That's a mix of Shakespeare and R.L. Stevenson, the cocky bastard. He also includes stipulations in the contracts that his artists can only record songs he has the publishing rights to.

PATSY

(lightbulb moment)

That's why I always recorded the crap he wan'ed me to.

DON HECHT

That way he makes money from all sides.

Angry, Patsy fires a series of shots. Hits some, misses some.

PATSY

Is he screwin' you on *Walkin'* too?

DON HECHT

No, thank God. I'd already written it with Alan Block for Kitty Wells.

PATSY

So how come he allowed me to do it?

DON HECHT

You weren't getting hits. If *Walkin'* worked, people would start buying your other songs, the songs with his name on it. Which is exactly what's happenin' now.

PATSY

I put in the work and ev'rybody else makes the money. It ain't fair.

Patsy slams the rifle on the stand, accidentally firing a shot - HITTING the Stand Worker in the leg. It's just a pellet but hurts like hell.

PATSY

Shit! I'm sorry, Hoss. Here, another dime for your troubles.

As the Stand Worker protests, Patsy and Don leave the scene.

PATSY

So what can I do Don? How do I get
outta this hellhole?

DON HECHT

You don't. Only thing you can do is
wait out your contract.

ON PATSY, considering her options and realizing she has none.

PATSY (V.O.)

The next couple of months felt like
pissin' up a rope. I was tired and
anxious for a change -

VARIOUS SHOTS

Patsy in a cycle of binge-eating, then going on an extreme diet; fighting with Charlie, then making up; performing but being uninspired; raising hell with Paul Cohen during recording sessions and avoiding McCall... All the while her belly growing and growing...

PATSY (V.O.)

Still, something wonderful happened -

INT. HOSPITAL - HALLWAY/ROOM - DAY

AUGUST, 1958. Charlie rushes through the maternity ward in his ARMY UNIFORM. Opens the door to a room--

PATSY (V.O.)

My baby girl was born.

--where Patsy's in bed, holding baby JULIE. Patsy looks at her like she's never looked at anything or anyone before.

PATSY (V.O.)

Ain't Julie a beaut? For the first time
in my life, I felt like a real woman.
Like I had a piece of myself out in the
world.

INT. PATSY & CHARLIE'S BRICK HOUSE - VARIOUS

PATSY AND CHARLIE PLAY HOUSE: around the kitchen table, feeding Julie; getting visits and presents from Mrs. Hensley and Connie; sitting around the TV, watching the Opry Hour...

PATSY (V.O.)

This was a period of bliss in my relationship with Charlie. 'Cause he got what he wanted-- I became a housewife.

SEVERAL SHOTS of Charlie feeling content: drinking, but not getting drunk; coming back from work to find Patsy and Julie waiting for him; eating steak while Patsy sits by him, playing the good housewife...

BEDROOM - ANOTHER DAY

Patsy opens up Julie's diaper and almost throws up due to the foul smell. Struggling to get through the diaper change--

PATSY (V.O.)

But the whole act didn't stick. I got tired of cleanin' asses. I needed to go back out there and use the gift the Good Lord gave me.

INT./EXT. PATSY'S CADILLAC/HIGHWAY - ANOTHER DAY

The car's packed to the brim with bags and suitcases. Charlie drives, while Patsy rides shotgun. Julie's in the back cozying it up in a baby-seat.

PATSY (V.O.)

If I was serious about havin' a future in country music, I had to stop messin' around and move to Nashville. That's where ev'rybody who was somebody was. And I still wanted to be a *somebody*.

The Cadillac darts past a big sign that reads -

"WELCOME TO NASHVILLE"

ARCHIVE FOOTAGE OF NASHVILLE IN 1959

All streets lead to Broadway, where COUNTRY STARS and FANS mix at TOOTSIE'S ORCHID LOUNGE, Ernest Tubb's Record Shop, Linebaugh's Cafeteria, and other hillbilly palaces. We also see the explosion of commerce that is 4TH Ave with its hotels, liquor shops, and department stores.

PATSY (V.O.)

The fresh start came with a new manager and a new contract with Decca. Finally I could say *'farewell to you Bill McCall, you deceitful son of a bitch'* -

INSERT - Patsy's last meet with McCall, telling him to shove it.

INT. HILLBILLY PALACE - ANOTHER NIGHT

Patsy sits between RANDY HUGHES (29) and **OWEN BRADLEY (44)**. They knock back shots of hard liquor in what looks like an enthusiastic celebration.

PATSY (V.O.)

You already met the fella with the beard, Randy, the one with the plane. The suit to the left is Owen Bradley, who replaced Paul Cohen as A&R chief at Decca. That day, we were celebratin' my fulfillin' a life-long dream -

INT. RYMAN AUDITORIUM - EARLIER THAT DAY

A BANNER reads "WELCOME TO THE OPRY FAMILY". Below, we find Patsy in tears as a TROUPE of a hundred musicians clap for her.

PATSY (V.O.)

I became a permanent member of the Opry. I was feelin' that for the first time in my life I was headed somewhere that meant somethin'...

CLOSE ON Patsy, feeling proud, soaking up the applause.

INT. POOL HALL - NIGHT

CLOSE ON Charlie, drunk, waiting for a reason to explode. He's holding onto his pool cue and a beer as **FARON YOUNG** (20s; country in every sense of the word; Patsy's fellow musician) cleans up the pool table expertly. Somehow, though, he misses the eight-ball...

FARON YOUNG

Guess today just ain't my day.

Charlie slams down his beer and gets into position. Looks at the white ball, then at the eight-ball. Charlie goes for it and... misses. Faron grins and hits the simple tap in.irate, Charlie BREAKS the pool cue in half.

FARON YOUNG

Make all the fuss you wan', but you gonna pay Charlie Dick. Or I'll go get the money from your wife.

CHARLIE

Fuck you Faron, I'll pay your goddamn money. I'll cut you a check right now.

FARON YOUNG

I guess you better.

Charlie reaches into his pocket and grabs his check book.

INT. NASHVILLE STREETS - COUPLE DAYS LATER

Patsy's doing window shopping when Faron approaches. Noticing--

PATSY

Hey Faron, your barn door's open and the mule's tryin' to run.

Faron looks down - *his fly's open*. Patsy laughs as he clumsily zips it up.

PATSY

What's doin', Hoss? You look madder than a wet hen.

FARON YOUNG

Just came from the bank. This here \$50 check-- (*shows it*) it bounced.

PATSY

You can't let the son of a bitch get away with it.

FARON YOUNG

That sumabitch is Charlie.

(Patsy does a spit take)

I won the pool game fair 'n' square Patsy and I wanna get paid.

Patsy's demeanor changes dramatically. Turns sour.

PATSY

You're a real class act. You know Charlie can't play for shit.

FARON YOUNG

He shouldn't be bettin' then.

Patsy reaches in her purse and pulls out \$50 in several bills.

PATSY

Here - take your \$50, goddamn you.

She throws them at Faron and leaves, huffing and puffing.

INT. PATSY & CHARLIE'S NASHVILLE APARTMENT - LATER

Charlie's on the couch, slamming down a beer. Several empty cans line on the coffee table. Patsy enters making up a storm--

PATSY

You ever write a bad check again and don't pay your bills like you're supposed to, Imma cut your balls off.

CHARLIE

Calm down, it was just 50 bucks.

PATSY

My 50 bucks. You wanna bet on pool games, use your own goddamn money.

CHARLIE

Did your forget? What's yours is mine, honey.

PATSY

(scoffs; even madder)

At least before you were a money-owin' bum but fucked me once in a while. Now you're just a good-for-nothin' bum. I keep layin' in bed, wantin' and waitin' but you don't fulfill your manly duties.

CHARLIE

Just keep on waitin' and maybe one of these days I'll come a-knockin'.

PATSY

You son of a bitch!

Patsy grabs an ASHTRAY sitting at an end table and HURLS IT at Charlie. *Misses him.* But not by much. Charlie doubles-down, a shithead smirk stamped on his face -

CHARLIE

Can't even do that right.

PATSY

Screw you, Charlie! I been forgivin' and forgettin' but I'm gettin' fed up. I have half a mind to leave you.

CHARLIE

(laughs insanely)

Honey, we both know you ain't goin' nowhere. But here's an idea-- how about you use some of that energy to record a hit? You sure could use one.

Patsy takes off in a bundle of nerves. Charlie chugs his beer.

PATSY (V.O.)
Charlie was a no-good waste of space,
but he was right about one thing-- I
needed a hit.

INT. OWEN BRADLEY'S OFFICE - ANOTHER DAY

CLOSE ON a record spinning. Title reads "*I FALL TO PIECES*".
Patsy stops it. Her mood continues to be dire.

PATSY
I hate this song. I won't do it.

Owen Bradley chews on tobacco.

OWEN BRADLEY
Why not?

PATSY
I told you, I hate it.

OWEN BRADLEY
You also hated *Walkin'*.

PATSY
Walkin' wasn't turned down by Brenda
Lee and Roy Drusky. I don't want sloppy
seconds. I wanna do *Lovin' in Vain*.

OWEN BRADLEY
What if I do ya a deal-- you record
Pieces and I let you do *Vain*.

PATSY
Been down that road with McCall. I don't
like where I ended up.

OWEN BRADLEY
I'm not McCall, Patsy, you know that.
We do things by the book 'round here.

Patsy thinks on it for a moment. Comes around to the idea.

PATSY
Okay Hoss, I'll try it. But I wanna do
it my way.

OWEN BRADLEY
Can't promise you that.

PATSY
It's my voice.

OWEN BRADLEY
And I know how to make the most out of
it. Let's just give it a go, I have a
real good feeling about this one.

INT. DECCA STUDIOS - RECORDING BOOTH/CONTROL ROOM

Alongside THE JORDANAIREs, Patsy sings *I Fall to Pieces* in a style closer to the one we know today. It's sounding great. Something both Owen and **HANK COCHRAN** (24; the song's co-writer) agree on. But after a few measures Patsy starts drifting into a ROCKABILLY TEMPO and Owen immediately stops the recording -

OWEN BRADLEY
No no no. This is a poignant ballad.
It requires Patsy Cline, the
spellbinder - *the weaver of magic* -,
not Patsy Cline, the belter.
(Patsy doesn't love this)
Just trust me on this one.

LATER

Patsy's doing the song, this time the way Bradley wants it. Everybody's really into it. Touched by the depths of her contralto voice. Then - *almost at the end* - Patsy throws in some *OOOOHS* and some *AAAAHS* and Owen *LOSES IT* -

OWEN BRADLEY
What the hell are you doing? You
almost had me in tears, and then you
let in the goddamn clowns.

PATSY
Watch the way you talk to me, Hoss.

OWEN BRADLEY
Patsy, with all due respect, your
training comes from stages in the Moose
Lodge circuit. You're a performer, not
a musician.

PATSY
Hoss, with all due respect, *shove it*.

OWEN BRADLEY
(getting agitated)
That's nice. Okay, Imma serve you a dose
of the truth. You ready? ...
(MORE)

OWEN BRADLEY (cont'd)

Your voice doesn't emphasize a song's narrative. It just emphasizes your voice. What you have is what Kay Starr has. What Jo Stafford has. If you had been born 20 years earlier, you'd have sung with Glenn Miller and Tommy Dorsey.

PATSY

What ifs ain't gonna get us fed.

OWEN BRADLEY

And that's what I'm trying to tell ya-- I hear you, Patsy Cline. I hear your voice. I know you know what your public wants, but I wanna give 'em what they don't yet know they want. You wanna make money, you wanna be famous? I'm offerin' you that, but you gotta stop being so damn stubborn and do what I tell you.

Patsy *yeah yeah's* Owen. Hank steps in with a lighter touch and a softer voice -

HANK COCHRAN

Patsy, hear Owen out. The way you're singing, it's better than I've ever imagined. We really got something here.

OWEN BRADLEY

All I ask is one take the way I want it, Patsy. Then we can try it your way.

PATSY

(sighs)

One take, Hoss.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - LATER

Patsy, Owen, Hank, and the SOUND ENGINEER listen to the tail end of the *Pieces* playback. Recorded the way Owen wanted it. And it's absolutely beautiful. We can HEAR Patsy getting into the groove, caressing the lyrics and the melody so tenderly that it feels like satin. Hank even fights back stubborn tears, genuinely moved by Patsy's rendition of his lyrics. When the song's done, Owen turns to Patsy -

OWEN BRADLEY

So. What do you think?

PATSY

I think I've found out who I am and what we been lookin' for.

OWEN BRADLEY
What do you mean?

PATSY
We don't have to search for my
identity anymore. This is it.

OWEN BRADLEY
...so I was right?

PATSY
Hoss, you were righter than right.

OWEN BRADLEY
(scoff-chuckles)
You know Patsy, I'd hate you if I
didn't like you so damn much.

INT. OWEN BRADLEY'S OFFICE - WEEKS LATER

Patsy drops the Billboard chart on Owen's desk.

PATSY
Pieces is climbin' the charts. It's
gonna be a hit.

OWEN BRADLEY
Lookin' like it.

PATSY
How about an advance?

OWEN BRADLEY
Let's have a hit first.

PATSY
Owen, the finance company is gonna
repo my car. I'm about to lose the
ice box. Help me out.

OWEN BRADLEY
What do you do with your money?

PATSY
I support my family.

OWEN BRADLEY
You mean, you enable your husband's bad
habits...

PATSY
Hold it right there, Hoss. Don't talk
about Charlie.

OWEN BRADLEY

Face it, he's a drunk and a gambler
and he's bleeding you dry.

PATSY

He's the father of my child.

OWEN BRADLEY

I know, but--

PATSY

Look Owen, you go to your church and I
go to mine.

Owen takes a beat, regrets bringing it up.

OWEN BRADLEY

You're right. I'm sorry.

PATSY

Already forgotten. So how about that
advance?

Owen looks at her. Considers. Then grabs his checkbook -

OWEN BRADLEY

I'll give you some money, but you
better keep performing.

PATSY

I'll perform, Hoss. And I'll knock
their socks off. Just you wait. They'll
be linin' up to buy the record -

ERNEST TUBB RECORD SHOP - VARIOUS

The *Pieces* single flies off the shelf until it's sold out.

PATSY'S SCRAPBOOK

*"Pieces is the #1 record at Decca and the #1 pop record in
Nashville. Feeling good, but need to keep hitting the road."*

INT. BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

1961. A big hullabaloo between Patsy and a SHADY PROMOTER.
TOUR MUSICIANS (including Connie) stand behind her in support.

*(NOTE: from here on, we'll see Patsy wearing bordello-style dresses,
bad wigs, and being more heavy-handed with her make-up)*

PATSY

I'll make it simple. No dough, no show.

PROMOTER

Patsy, please, I can't come up with the money right away, but I'll send it over as soon as I can.

We HEAR the public clamoring for '*Patsy! Patsy! Patsy!*' -

PATSY

Hear that, Hoss. They're waitin'...

PROMOTER

Just do one song. I'll pay you later. You have my word.

EXT. STAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Patsy comes up. Under rousing applause -

PATSY

Folks, we've been workin' for this Promoter and ain't been paid yet. Country folks have to eat too. I'm sorry to say but as much as we love you, we just can't perform for you tonight.

Fans starts *booing* - *cursing* - *stamping their feet*. Patsy waves and walks off the stage.

INT. BACKSTAGE/PATSY & CHARLIE'S APARTMENT - INTERCUT

Patsy's on the phone. CRYING cuts through the line.

PATSY

I still have two weeks on the tour. I can't just leave.

Charlie's juggling Julie, who's having a fit. Also-- LITTLE RANDY, the newest addition to the family. Charlie rocks him on his knee as he cries and cries.

CHARLIE

Call Connie and tell her to come babysit. I need a night out.

PATSY

And drink away the money I'm bustin' my ass to make? You got another thing comin' Charlie Dick.

CHARLIE

Don't you miss your children?

PATSY

How dare you? I'm sacrificin' ev'rythin' for them.

CHARLIE

Don't hang your hat on it, honey. This music thing is all for you. You can't do without it.

PATSY

Don't you wan' a better life, Charlie? A nicer car? A bigger house? Maybe a trip somewhere hot? My voice will give us that, but I gotta do what I gotta do.

CHARLIE

Just ain't right for me to always be stuck at home. I'm goin' crazy.

Patsy sees the Promoter running back with two grocery sacks filled with crisp dollar bills.

PATSY

For chrissakes Charlie, you're a father. Act like one.

Patsy slams the phone. To the Promoter--

PATSY

That's more like it, Hoss.
(to the Musicians)
Somebody make sure it's all there.

INT. GROCERY STORE - A WEEK LATER

Charlie roams the canned foods aisle, pushing Little Randy on a stroller that doubles as a shopping cart. Little Julie's in tow with a grocery list in hand.

CHARLIE

Let's see that list, honey.

Julie hands it. Charlie clocks it, then scans the canned foods.

CHARLIE

Tuna... tuna... tuna...

Finds it. Grabs a handful of cans and throws them in the cart. That's when he notices a MAN up ahead, looking through whiskey options. A Man Charlie doesn't want to be seen by.

He turns the stroller around and scrambles to get out of there. Tells Julie to hurry up. But--

MAN

Charlie Dick, is that you?

Charlie tenses up, stops. Turns around,

CHARLIE

Hey Joe. What's going on?

JOE

I could ask ya the same. You do the shoppin' now?

CHARLIE

Patsy's on the road.

JOE

You scrubbin' the commodes too?

Charlie HATES this.

CHARLIE

When I have to.

JOE

Goddam Charlie, what has that woman done to you?

Charlie boils. Joe notices and doubles-down.

JOE

You checked your balls lately? Still anything there, or did Patsy take 'em on the road as well?

CHARLIE

You're out of line, Joe. If you have a problem, we can take it outside.

JOE

Whoa, calm down Charlie, I'm just razzin' ya a lil'. I think it's great whatchya doin'. Very progressive.

CHARLIE

Yeah. I gotta go. I'll see ya at work.

Charlie grabs Julie by the hand and pushes the stroller. Joe grins, endlessly amused.

JOE

Take it easy, Mr. Cline.

INT. NEWSPAPER PRINTING PLANT - A WEEK LATER

Rows of LINOTYPE MACHINES in an enclosed space making overwhelmingly loud CLACKING sounds. Joe and other WORKERS are manning the hot presses when Charlie walks in.

JOE
Look who it is. Mr. Cline.

CHARLIE
Careful now, Joe.

WORKER #2
I thought you quit.

CHARLIE
Don't go thinking too much. Your brain can't handle it.

WORKER #2
Oh yeah, so where have you been?
Cleanin' asses and breastfeeding?

CHARLIE
Hey, shut your goddamn mouth!

JOE
Hold your horses, Charlie, he didn't mean nothin' by it. Just that not every man would be confident enough to be the *woman of the house*.

The boys CRACK UP. Charlie starts brewing a real bad temper.

CHARLIE
I'm warnin' ya. All y'all. Stop this!

JOE
Okay Charlie. Okay.
(beat; then--)
Just one more thing - did Patsy force you to get on your knees and suck her pecker before she let you back to work?

CHARLIE LOSES IT. LUNGES at Joe and CLOCKS HIM. Worker 2 tries to restrain him, gets an elbow to the face instead. Blood starts flowing from his broken nose. Joe punches Charlie in the stomach, more WORKERS flock to them, and now we have a BRAWL...

INT. PATSY & CHARLIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Charlie's in a foul mood. Holds a STEAK to his shiner as he knocks back a bottle of whiskey. It's almost gone too.

Patsy walks in to a strangely quiet house. Seeing Charlie--

PATSY

What the hell happened to you? Where are the kids?

CHARLIE

No "*hi Charlie*"... no "*how was your day honey*"... You just walk in and start interrogating me like you're the goddamn Spanish inquisition.

PATSY

You have a steak in your eye and I don't see my kids anywhere... But you're right, I should be worried about pleasantries.

Charlie THROWS the whiskey bottle-- SHATTERS on the wall.

CHARLIE

Don't give me sass. I'm not in the fuckin' mood.

PATSY

(firmer)

Where are my kids, Charlie?

CHARLIE

With Connie.

PATSY

And why's that?

CHARLIE

'Cause I wanted some goddamn peace and quiet, that's why.

PATSY

Don't worry, you'll get it.
(re: the shattered glass)
After you clean up this mess.

Charlie gets up and STRIKES HER! A powerful backhand that busts open her eyebrow. And he doesn't stop there. While Patsy's in shock, he HITS her again. Patsy falls to the ground. Towering over her--

CHARLIE

Told you I'm not in the goddamn mood. You want that cleaned, you clean it yourself.

PATSY
 You feelin' more like a man now? Is
 this what it takes?

CHARLIE SEES RED! STRIKES PATSY AGAIN AND AGAIN.

This isn't like before. Like when Patsy stroke back. This time, Charlie's anger paralyzes her. Patsy's never scared, but she's scared now... As Charlie unbuckles his belt, we **CUT TO:**

LATER

Patsy's all swollen and bruised, drained from her usual *joie de vivre*. She drags on a cigarette as she stares at the telephone. She stares and stares and eventually... she picks up the receiver and makes a call. **CUT TO:**

EXT. FRONT PORCH - LATER

A POLICE OFFICER questions Patsy.

POLICE OFFICER
 Did Mr. Dick hit you ma'am?

PATSY
 Somebody did, Hoss.

As Charlie gets dragged away by ANOTHER OFFICER--

POLICE OFFICER
 Do you want to press charges?

Patsy looks at Charlie being shoved in the back of a squad car.

PATSY
 No. Just make sure he cools down and
 sobers up before you send him back.

INT. PATSY & CHARLIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - THAT NIGHT

Whiskey on the coffee-table. Patsy flips longingly through her SCRAPBOOK alongside Connie, who works hard to hide her concern for Patsy's well-being.

INSERT SCRAPBOOK - page after page of collages with newspaper clippings, photos, and diary entries. It's a comprehensive look into Patsy's life up to this point - *celebratory, joyful, but also a little nostalgic.*

Patsy points to a picture of her and Connie on Patsy's wedding day. Expressive smiles on their faces.

PATSY

That was a fun day, wasn't it?

CONNIE

Best wedding I've ever been to.

PATSY

Nobody can accuse Charlie and I of not knowing how to have a good time.

CONNIE

I just worry about the rest...

PATSY

The best of marriages are born of compromise. Enhancin' one aspect often means sacrificin' another.

CONNIE

That's true. But neither of you ever compromise. And way I see it, you're the one makin' all the sacrifices.

Patsy grabs her drink. Takes a healthy swig.

PATSY

We make it work.

CONNIE

Make it work? Have you looked at yourself in the mirror? You're all black and blue, Pat. It ain't normal.

PATSY

He's a part of me, Connie. As much as my hands or my voice are a part of me. I couldn't shake him if I wanted to. I'd feel... *amputated*.

CONNIE

I don't get it. You're the strongest gal I know. You don't take crap from anyone. Why do you let Charlie treat you like this?

Patsy pauses. For a long time. Takes another sip of her drink. Her mind working. Trying to make a decision. Then--

PATSY

I'm gonna tell ya somethin', Connie. Somethin' I've never told anyone. Including mama. So this goes to the grave with you. You hear me?

CONNIE

Of course Pat, cross my heart.

Patsy gears up. After an exhale -

PATSY

You know about my daddy, right? He was a son of a bitch, an awful man. But he - well... *he was also my first.*

CONNIE

...first what?

FLASHBACK - PATSY'S ROOM - 1946

14-year-old Patsy's in her bed, reading a magazine. A shit-faced SAM walks in holding a bottle of whiskey. Closes the door behind him.

SAM

Say Ginny, you're a very special girl, you know that? And you're growing up so fast. You're nothing like the other girls your age.

PATSY

You think so, daddy?

Sam sits on the bed next to Patsy. *Uncomfortably close.*

SAM

Oh yes I do.

He starts stroking her hair.

SAM

A very special girl.

BACK TO PRESENT

Connie slides a hand across her mouth. Horrified.

PATSY

The worst part was... I-I...

Patsy really wants to say it, but just thinking about it makes her skin crawl. Finally, she musters up the courage -

PATSY

I felt somethin' when it happened.
Something that ain't bad.

(MORE)

PATSY (cont'd)
It's horrible to say, I know, but just 'cause I was young, it don't mean I was innocent. But the guilt, Connie, it followed me. It's still with me today, right here -

She grabs her throat firmly. Connie's shell-shocked.

CONNIE
My God, that's horrible. You poor thing.

PATSY
Don't do that. Don't pity me. Whatever I deserve, I deserve.

CONNIE
But you don't deserve it.

PATSY
I do.

Connie turns very serious.

CONNIE
Now you listen to me, Pat. Your daddy wasn't the only son of a bitch around.
(Patsy's shocked)
Oh yeah. I reported him to the sheriff and testified in court against him. He's gonna die in prison 'cause that's what he deserves.

Connie grabs Patsy's hand and then delivers, with all the empathy in the world--

CONNIE
But you-- you did nothin' wrong, Pat. You were young and confused and you should've never been put in that position. I know you, and I know you have the heart the size of a wheelbarrow. It's time you use it on yourself. 'Cause that's what I learned, no amount of givin' is gonna ever fill you up.

PATSY
Don't worry. I can live with it. And I can live with Charlie. As long as I have my music, I can live with all of it...

CONNIE
I'm worried Charlie might just go and kill you one day.

PATSY
That's not how I go. I know that much.

EXT. MADISON SQUARE SHOPPING CENTER - PARKING LOT - DAY

JUNE 14, 1961. Patsy and her brother Sam Jr. walk out the shopping center and head towards Patsy's Cadillac.

PATSY
...it's such a magical place. You'll love the Opry, Sam.

SAM JR.
I bet. Mama and Sylvia Mae are buzzin' too. They been yappin' about the show all week.

Patsy notices a storm brewing up ahead -

PATSY
We better get goin'. I don't like the look o' that.

EXT./INT. HILLS LANE/PATSY'S CAR - LATER

Patsy's Cadillac drives along a section of Old Hickory Blvd. Above it, the clouds get thicker and darker.

Patsy WHISTLES along to a country tune playing on the radio. Sam checks his wristwatch: 4:42PM.

The Cadillac comes on top of a bridge and then the road drops in valley-like fashion for about a block.

Up to this point, *all good*.

The problem comes when the road goes up another hill and TWO CARS on the other side are coming straight at the Cadillac -

Two cars Patsy can't see right away.

One of them, driven by a RECKLESS WOMAN, tries to overtake the other, but there isn't enough room. It doesn't matter that the road's marked with a double yellow line. The Reckless Woman goes for it anyway --

GUNS HER CAR and makes her move. But there's no time. No space. She FLOORS IT and before Sam Jr. can let out a WARNING SCREAM--

CRASH! THE WOMAN SMASHES INTO PATSY'S CADILLAC HEAD ON!

PATSY GOES THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD AND BACK, cutting her face in a horrific way. Her scalp just about peels off of her head. Sam doesn't go flying, but is brutally HIT by pieces of STEEL and IRON.

Right away, cars screech to halt and their DRIVERS rush out to help. Find the Reckless Woman DEAD, bleeding over the steering wheel. Then move to the Cadillac where they find Patsy and Sam unconscious. Also bleeding. Alive, but in bad shape.

We go WIDE. See the cars as real pieces of junk. Beyond any saving. Smoke pouring out of them. Pieces of metal and shattered glass everywhere. Blood pooling on the hot pavement. Bone shards being dragged by the wind.

ONLOOKERS stare, worried and shocked. This accident scene is every person's worst case scenario...

INT. MADISON HOSPITAL - LATER

Charlie rushes inside in a state of panic. We've never seen him like this. Reaching the front desk, he asks for Patsy, says he's the husband.

RECEPTIONIST

Your wife's at the care of Dr. Evans.
He'll come talk to you when he can.

CONNIE (O.S.)

Charlie!

Charlie turns to find Connie with tears in her eyes.

CONNIE

I heard the news on the radio and
rushed over to the scene.

CHARLIE

Is she gonna be okay?

CONNIE

(stuttering)

It ain't good, Charlie. I don't know
what's goin' on, but what I saw-- it
ain't good.

Charlie loses his balance - holds onto the counter. That's when the clinical and direct DR. HILLIS EVANS emerges from the "NO ACCESS" doors.

DR. HILLIS EVANS

Are you Mrs. Cline's husband?
(MORE)

DR. HILLIS EVANS (cont'd)

(Charlie nods)

Your wife's alive, but in rough shape.
Her forehead is badly lacerated. The
cuts on her face missed her eyes by a
quarter of an inch. Otherwise, she'd be
blind. Her hip's knocked out of its
socket. Her leg ligaments are pulled.
Her right wrist is completely fractured.
We're going to take her to surgery now.

Charlie's shell-shocked. Connie takes a hand to her chest.

CONNIE

And Sam? Her brother?

DR. HILLIS EVANS

He has a hole punched in the chest big
as a dime, about 3cm deep. Also cuts and
bruises all over. He's not in great
shape, but he'll pull through. Now if
you'll excuse me, I have to go back.

Dr. Evans leaves unceremoniously. Connie grabs Charlie's arm.

CONNIE

We'll keep the faith, Charlie. We'll
pray and keep the faith.

INT. OPERATING ROOM - LATER

Dr. Evans and his OR NURSES perform surgery on Patsy. Patching
her up best they can. Collecting piece of gauze after piece of
gauze soaked up in Patsy's life source.

DR. HILLIS EVANS

We're losing too much blood. Nurse,
prepare a transfusion.

As she attends to it, B.P. NURSE sounds an alarm--

B.P. NURSE

Her B.P.'s going down, Dr. Evans.
We're losing her.

Patsy starts to go, and then-- FLATLINES!

DR. HILLIS EVANS

The defibrillator. Quick.

Dr. Evans gets it. Tells everyone to CLEAR and-- Z-CHUNK.
Nothing. He goes again-- CLEAR and-- Z-CHUNK. *Still nothing...*

INT. WAITING ROOM - HOURS LATER

Charlie's pacing, chain-smoking. Mrs. Hensley nurses Julie and Randy. Connie tries to read a magazine, *but who's she kidding?*

CHARLIE

Something's wrong. They shouldn't be takin' so long.

CONNIE

It's 'cause Pat doesn't go down without a fight.

This comforts Charlie. There's a beat. Then Connie gets up and takes Charlie aside, far away from Mrs. Hensley's ears.

CONNIE

Charlie, I gotta say somethin'. When this is over, things gotta change.

CHARLIE

(filled w/ regret)

I know.

CONNIE

Patsy's suffered enough. She deserves better. If you can't give her that, then you need to let her go.

Charlie's about to speak when Dr. Evans comes through the "NO ACCESS" doors. Approaches and makes no suspense -

DR. HILLIS EVANS

It was a tough surgery. Patsy was almost gone twice and we had to give her 3 pints of blood on account of a ruptured artery. Unfortunately, I don't have an optimistic prognostic.

Mrs. Hensley breaks down. Charlie clenches his jaw.

DR. HILLIS EVANS

But she's a fighter. Only thing she can do is keep on fighting.

CONNIE

She will. I know my friend doc. She ain't goin' nowhere.

Dr. Evans leaves. To Connie with real fear in his eyes -

CHARLIE

Oh God, I don't know what I'd do without her.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

Patsy's hooked to an IV drop. Her face is all black and blue. Bandaged up from her eyes to her hairline. Her leg's in a cast from a pulley... Once indestructible-seeming, Patsy now looks like she's inching closer and closer to the gates of Heaven.

INT. WAITING ROOM - LATER

The hours are getting on. It's just Charlie, Connie, and Randy (manager) now. Sitting in silence. A bundle of nerves. An OPRY SINGER walks up to Charlie.

OPRY SINGER

Excuse me Charlie, I'm a friend of Patsy's from the Opry. I just wan'ed to let ya know that a few of us are waitin' outside. Prayin' for her.

CHARLIE

Tell 'em to come in. They can wait here.

OPRY SINGER

That won't do.

CHARLIE

Why not?

OPRY SINGER

Well... Come with me.

Charlie, Connie, and Randy follow the Opry Singer to the--

EXT. HOSPITAL ENTRANCE

--where TWO HUNDRED MUSICIANS are gathered around. Waiting for news on Patsy. Playing and singing Patsy's THAT WONDERFUL SOMEONE in unison.

That wonderful Someone / Who makes
the stars all shine...

CLOSE ON Charlie and Connie, moved to tears.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

Patsy slowly comes to. Takes a moment to register she's alive. Then another one to scan her surroundings and put two and two together. That's when the pain HITS. People often say they feel like they've been 'run over by a truck', but they don't know what that's like. Patsy does.

Then her eyes grow darker with fear. She's LOOKING AT SOMETHING. Something we don't see. She musters a--

PATSY
 (struggling through)
 Please, not yet... I ain't afraid of
 goin', but not yet.
 (struggle intensifies)
 You gimme time, I'll be better. More
 devoted. I'll--

Patsy can't muster any more words. Hurts too much. After a beat, she dozes off...

NEXT MORNING

A sleepless Charlie walks in wanting nothing more than to hug Patsy. But when he sees her in that state, he pauses. Patsy, half-conscious, calls faintly for him.

CHARLIE
 Yes, it's me honey.

He sits by her side and holds her hand tenderly. Firmly. Patsy tries to say something, but it doesn't come out.

CHARLIE
 Don't speak. Rest.

PATSY
 Jesus was here. Ain't my time yet.

CHARLIE
 Okay honey, okay.

Patsy drifts off back to sleep. Charlie holds onto her.

CHARLIE
 God Patsy, I'm so sorry. I don't want
 to lose you... I can't lose you... I--

Charlie crashes on top of Patsy and weeps...

THE NEXT DAY

Patsy snaps her eyes open and immediately pain crashes through her. Lets out a groan of despair, waking up a sleeping Charlie.

CHARLIE
 Are you okay? Do you want me to call
 the doctor?

PATSY
I can take it.

CHARLIE
(makes a motion to get up)
I think I better--

PATSY
Will you just stay put?

Charlie does. There's a moment as Patsy breathes the pain in and out. Managing it. Dealing with it. Then--

CHARLIE
Pats, I-I-- I'm sorry.

PATSY
Me too. I should've divorced you a long time ago.

CHARLIE
Don't say that. I know I haven't been the best husband, but-- I love you. And I know you love me too.

PATSY
What's love got to do with it?

CHARLIE
(committed)
No more drinking. I promise.

PATSY
I'll believe it when I see it. But I tell ya this-- all I gotta do is pick up the phone and this whole marriage is done in less than 3 months.

CHARLIE
I understand. You have my word.

Charlie squeezes Patsy's hand.

DAYS LATER

Flowers, telegrams, cards, and letters adorn the room. They're from members of the Opry, Decca Executives, DJs, fans... Some of the names we see: the Carter family, Roy Acuff, Faron Young, and Tex Ritter. Charlie and Connie sort through them as a female VOICE belts out a cover of *I Fall to Pieces* on a RADIO.

Patsy listens attentively. When it's done, the singer dedicates the song to Patsy. This goes down well.

PATSY

Well, I'll be damned, this gal sang my song and dedicated it to me. Who is she Charlie?

CHARLIE

Think the name's Loretta.

PATSY

Why don't you go down to Tubbs's shop and tell her I'd like to meet her?

LATER

LORETTA LYNN (29; future country star) enters the room energetically and straight away notices all the flowers.

LORETTA

My goodness, all the florists in this here town must be sold out.

(Patsy turns to her)

Hiya Patsy. I'm Loretta Lynn. It's a great pleasure to meet ya.

TIME LAPSE OF THE HOURS GOING BY

Patsy and Loretta talking and laughing. That is, as much as Patsy *can* talk and laugh.

PATSY

Please Loretta, no more, it hurts and I'm gonna break my stitches.

PATSY (V.O.)

From the very first moment, Loretta and I talked a mile a minute. I was bandaged up pretty good but couldn't stop laughin' up a storm. That's the sign of a great friend, which is what I found in Loretta.

EXT. HOSPITAL LAWN - A WEEK LATER

Patsy's in a wheelchair being pushed by Mrs. Hensley. Breathing fresh air for the first time in two weeks.

PATSY

I tell ya mama, the pain's so unbearable, sometimes I thank God when I go to sleep.

(MORE)

PATSY (cont'd)
 And when I can't, I still thank Him
 'cause it means I'm alive enough to
 be awake.

MRS. HENSLEY
 The good Lord took you and sent you
 back. He's not done with you yet.

PATSY
 It's cause he still wan's me to sing.
 Some people hope and die with their
 song still in 'em. I ain't gonna let
 that happen.

MRS. HENSLEY
 I know you won't, Ginny. But you
 gotta rest now. Doctor says you'll
 need crutches for 6 months. Can't
 even put your leg on the floor for 3.

PATSY
 But I can still sing, mama. And mark my
 words, I'm gonna do it as soon as I can.

Off Patsy, with a fiery determination in her eyes, we **CUT TO:**

INT. RYMAN AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

3 MONTHS LATER. SEPTEMBER 16. Patsy sings the final notes of *I Fall to Pieces*. In CRUTCHES. Her leg still in a cast. We can tell by the way she contorts her face that the pain is sharpening its teeth again. Which affects her voice. Not that the crowd cares. They're eating it all up.

When Patsy finishes, she gets a standing ovation. Almost taking her to tears...

PATSY
 Thank you folks. I'd like to say
 somethin' before I go.
 (the crowd settles down)
 I used to think happiness was a product
 of my earnin's matchin' my yearnin's.
 But when I was in that hospital bed,
 all I could think about was bein' in
 this stage singin' for you. You give me
 life. Hell, you brought me back to
life. And for that, I thank you from
 the bottom of my heart.

The crowd goes wild. *Cheers, applause, whistles.* Patsy hobbles off to the wing of the stage where Faron Young and Connie are waiting for her. Connie gives her a kiss on the cheek--

CONNIE

You know I love ya Pat, but goin' up
after that is unfair.

PATSY

Nah, you go show 'em how it's done.

Connie takes the stage as Patsy collapses onto Faron Young's
arms. Dead tired.

FARON YOUNG

Some people will do anything to get
applause.

He says it razzingly, but Patsy takes it to heart.

PATSY

No Sheriff, it's talent and guts
they're applaudin'.

FARON YOUNG

They can't help it when you go out
there with those sympathy sticks.

PATSY

Why you jealous son of a bitch! Here,
you take 'em and you go out there
with 'em.

FARON YOUNG

Oh no. I wouldn't want to deprive you.
Your public is demanding you.

Patsy *swings a crutch* at Faron who barely avoids getting hit.

FARON YOUNG

Jesus Patsy, can't you take a joke?

Charlie appears right in time to hold Patsy. Faron rushes
out of there.

CHARLIE

What happened!?

PATSY

That son of a bitch is jealous of me.

CHARLIE

Faron? He loves you. He was just
giving you a hard time.

PATSY

(calming down--)
Maybe I'm just on edge.
(MORE)

PATSY (cont'd)
 (flinches as pain hits her)
It still hurts, Charlie.

CHARLIE
 I know, honey. Come, let's go find
 you somethin' for that pain.

INT. PATSY & CHARLIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - A MONTH LATER

Patsy's in her wheelchair, very high-strung, talking on the phone. On her lap, there's a MAGAZINE open on a page of a sumptuous tri-level HOUSE.

PATSY
 ...get me more dates with bigger
 paydays, Randy. I'm tired of waitin'
 to get the house of my dreams.

In the wall mirror, Patsy catches the reflection of Little Randy on the floor behind her, putting an ASHTRAY in his mouth.

PATSY
 For Chrissakes Randy, take that thing
 out of your mouth.

He stares at her blankly. Keeps doing what he's doing.

PATSY
 (to Randy Manager)
 Just make it happen, Hoss.
 (hangs up; then--)
 Stop that, Randy. I'm not in the mood.

Still nothing. Patsy utters a *goddamn it*, and tries to maneuver the wheelchair. But JERKS IT too quickly and turns at the same time, causing her to lose control and FALL OFF. Slamming on the ground. Patsy lets out a SCREAM of ire and frustration. Then calls for--

PATSY
 Charlie! Charlie!

But he's nowhere to be seen. Patsy fights through the bursts of pain and tries to get herself up as Little Randy watches, trying to chew on the ashtray...

PATSY (V.O.)
 Once we settled back into the ol'
 routine, Charlie forgot all about his
 promise and the bottle came back into
 our lives. At least this time something
 good thing came out of it -

INT. TOOTSIE'S ORCHID LOUNGE - ANOTHER DAY

Charlie's back on his bullshit. Drinking at the bar by himself in the middle of the day. A FELLA in a cowboy hat sits a couple of stools over. To the BARTENDER--

COWBOY HAT FELLA

Gimme a beer, Joe. And get one for my friend here. Seems like he's runnin' low on fuel.

CHARLIE

You sure know how to make friends 'round here.

COWBOY HAT FELLA

The name's Willie. Willie Nelson.

Yep, that Willie Nelson. But not the outlaw, scruffy bearded, bandana-wearing, pot-smoking Willie. That one comes later. This is clean cut, neatly-combed, and short-haired.

CHARLIE

Willie, Willie... wait I know you, I heard you sing "Hello Walls" right here at Tootsie's last year. And that Ray Price song, "Night Life", you wrote that, didn't you?

WILLIE NELSON

(tipping his hat)

Yessir, that'd be me.

CHARLIE

Well, it's nice to meet ya. I'm Charlie Dick.

WILLIE NELSON

Patsy Cline's husband??

If Charlie had a nickel for every time he's heard this one...

CHARLIE

The one 'n' only.

WILLIE NELSON

I met Patsy a while back. We hit it off, but I didn't have a song for her.

CHARLIE

Do you have one now? She's lookin'.

WILLIE NELSON

As a matter of fact, I do. One that'll
fit her voice like a glove.

CHARLIE

Buy me another round and I'll make
sure she hears it.

WILLIE NELSON

Got yourself a deal, chief.

INT. PATSY & CHARLIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NEXT NIGHT

Charlie's knocking back a beer while Willie's demo plays in
the record player. The song's more '*spoken*' than sang, a
rarity for these days. When it's done, Charlie plays it again.
Patsy walks in from the kitchen. In crutches and on edge.

PATSY

Ain't you sick o' hearin' that damn
song? I can't cook in peace.

CHARLIE

No ma'am.

PATSY

Well, I am.
(then, slightly intrigued--)
What is it anyway?

CHARLIE

It's the song Willie Nelson gave me
for you. It's called *Crazy*.

PATSY

It sure is.

CHARLIE

You have to do it, Patsy. Here's a
winner, if I've ever heard one.

PATSY

I must be hearin' things. My darlin'
husband wan's me to go to the studio
instead of cookin' him a hot meal.

CHARLIE

If you're gonna keep makin' music, you
oughta make something's worth a damn.

PATSY

You mean, somethin' that'll let ya
keep drinkin' and gamblin' on my dime.

CHARLIE

I mean what I meant. Willie's the future. You wanna be in his business.

PATSY

Then you record the song. I'll never do it.

INT. DECCA STUDIOS - RECORDING BOOTH/CONTROL ROOM - ANOTHER DAY

A restless, bruised Patsy leans against a stool, crutches to her side. Backed by two violins, a viola, and a cello, she "speaks" *Crazy* into the mic, just as Willie did in the demo. But it's not working. In the control room, Owen and Willie Nelson look at each other and agree. Charlie's also there.

OWEN BRADLEY

Patsy, we need to try something else.

PATSY

I'm doin' it just like Willie did it.

WILLIE NELSON

Don't worry about that, Patsy. Make it your own. It'll be even better.

PATSY

Maybe it's all these strings, Hoss. They're pretty swishy. Not very country, you ask me.
(to the Musicians)
No offense, fellas.

Offense taken, but what can they do?

OWEN BRADLEY

Let me worry about the sound. You work on the voice.

They start over, and this time Patsy starts modulating down and caressing the lyrics. A couple of measures in, she finds the groove and everything starts falling into place. Patsy's voice involves the studio and quickly everyone-- from the musicians to Owen, Willie, and Charlie-- know what's happening... they're recording a HIT!

But then, during a high note, Patsy YELPS and stops abruptly.

OWEN BRADLEY

What's wrong? You had it, Pat.

PATSY
(visibly uncomfortable)
The high notes. They keep hittin' my
ribs and it hurts like hell.

OWEN BRADLEY
Okay, you take it easy then. We'll
lay down the music and you can come
back later for the vocals.

PATSY
No Hoss, I can manage it. Just gimme
five and we'll give it another go.

LATER

Patsy sings the last few notes of *Crazy* as we know it today.
Owen's elated about what he's laying down. So is Charlie, who
glows with a sense of self-vindication. When Patsy's done -

OWEN BRADLEY
That's it, we have it!

APPLAUSE breaks out in the studio and in the control room.
Charlie's proud grin sets Patsy off.

PATSY
Whatchya smilin' about, Hoss?

CHARLIE
Just happy for you, is all.

PATSY
Sure you are. Isn't there a beer with
your name on it somewhere?

Charlie lifts his hand, which was obstructed by the recording
equipment, to reveal a beer. Patsy fumes. Turns to Owen -

PATSY
Listen Owen, aren't we goin' too far
from country with this song?

OWEN BRADLEY
I think we're going just far enough.

Patsy takes Owen's word for it, but now he's thinking about it.

INT. OWEN BRADLEY'S OFFICE - LATER

TEDDY WILBURN attentively listens to *Crazy* as sang by Patsy.
After a few measures of, Owen stops the tape.

OWEN

What do you think Teddy, is Patsy right? Have we gone too far from country?

TEDDY

It's not like Patsy's got just one hit behind her. She's made her mark with each of her big sellers in both country and pop. You ask me, she's given you a great gift, Owen - she's crossed over. She can sing to anyone, anywhere.

SLAM CUT TO FLYER

The Opry troupe. Patsy Cline. Marty Robbins. Faron Young. CARNEGIE HALL. November 29.

INT. CARNEGIE HALL - STAGE - DAY

NOVEMBER 29. Patsy walks into an empty Carnegie Hall alongside Randy. In complete awe of the four-decked, 2700-seat auditorium. There's magic in the air.

PATSY

Tell ya Hoss, this is the damn prettiest hall I've ever been in.

RANDY

Sure is.

PATSY

All I can think about is the first-class talent that walked this stage.

Patsy stomps her foot and listens to how the sound travels...

PATSY

These acoustics ain't half-bad either.

Patsy lets out a long, jubilant YODEL. Her notes bounce all over the place cleanly and clearly.

PATSY

Don't even need a mike. You can just stand here and be heard way up yonder in the last row.

RANDY

Know what they call it, the last row?

PATSY

What?

RANDY

The gods. 'Cause of how high up it is.

PATSY

Well, Imma make sure whoever parks
their caboose up there hears my voice
like they're supposed to.

CUT TO: THE MOMENT THAT OPENED THIS STORY

This time WE'RE IN THE LAST ROW, but still hear Patsy's voice
in all its splendor. It's still evocative. Still emotional.
Still can make you dream or make you cry.

IN ATTENDANCE, some familiar faces: Mrs. Hensley, Connie and
her husband, and many celebrity guests.

ON STAGE, Randy plays guitar and The Jordanaires back up
Patsy. When the song ends, the crowd goes WILD. Patsy takes
it all in. Like she's soaking sunshine on a summer day.

PATSY (V.O.)

Goddamn Faron was right, I like the
applause. What can I say, I give my
public somethin' and they give it right
back. It's a trade as as pure as water.
Cleansing too. When I sing, my problems
cease to exist...

INT. PATSY & CHARLIE'S BRICK HOUSE - BATHROOM - ANOTHER DAY

Patsy looks at herself in the mirror. SEES-- bags under her
eyes and an overall worn-out, depleted look. She then lowers
her dress just enough to reveal NASTY BRUISES ON HER ARMS.

PATSY (V.O.)

Which is why I had to make sure I didn't
lose it again. As great as Carnegie was,
I needed new songs. Song my public could
hang a wish 'n' a prayer on.

Doorbell RINGS.

HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Patsy opens the door. Hank Cochran stands there with a smile,
a guitar, and a bottle of Jack Daniel's.

PATSY (V.O.)
 Fortunately, the Almighty sent me Hank
 just when I needed him most.

LIVING ROOM - LATER

Patsy and Cochran catch up. Half of the bottle's gone. Patsy drains her glass like someone needing alcohol to be a cure. Cochran watches on, concerned.

COCHRAN
 Patsy, I know it's none o'my
 business, but-- are you okay?

PATSY
 Just dandy. Why do you ask?

COCHRAN
 Well, you just played Carnegie, Crazy's
 doin' good numbers, your career's on the
 up and up, but you seem... gassed.

PATSY
 You ain't got nothin' to worry about,
 Hank. Now, am I gonna hear this
 masterpiece of yours or what?

Cochran doesn't insist. Sips on his Jack, then takes his guitar and melodically starts singing -

I've got your picture / That you gave
to me / And it's signed "with love" /
Just like it used to be

Patsy listens attentively. Cochran continues--

The only thing different / The only
thing new / I've got these little
things / She's got you...

When Hank finishes, Patsy pours them another round and--

PATSY
 Sing it again. I wanna learn it this
 time.

COCHRAN
 Knew you were gonna love it.

Cochran starts over and we **CUT TO:**

PATSY'S SCRAPBOOK: "Found next hit!"

INT. DECCA STUDIOS - RECORDING BOOTH/CONTROL ROOM - ANOTHER DAY

Patsy's recording *She's Got You* with Owen Bradley. She doesn't look healthy. What she has to give, she gives to the song. We get DRAW CLOSER on Patsy as her voice loses intensity and-- SHE PASSES OUT! Everybody rushes over in a panic.

OWEN BRADLEY
Stop crowding her for Chrissakes.
(shakes Patsy)
Patsy! Patsy! Are you okay?

Patsy comes to. Looking like a deer in the headlights.

PATSY
What happened?

OWEN BRADLEY
You passed out all of a sudden.

PATSY
Passin' out, *me*? You must be seein' things.

OWEN BRADLEY
(helping her up)
Let's take a break. Get some food on ya.

PATSY
We're recordin' a hit. There's no breaks when you're recordin' a hit.

OWEN BRADLEY
Patsy, I really think we ought--

PATSY
Owen, get your ass back in that control room.
(to the musicians)
You fellas ready?
(everyone hesitates)
C'mon, let's go, we're payin' for studio time.

The musicians get back to their instruments. Owen moves to the control room, but can't shake the feeling something's off.

INT. PATSY & CHARLIE'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - ANOTHER DAY

Little Randy's crying uncontrollably on Patsy's arms. Her short-fuse is even shorter today.

PATSY

Oh for the love of God Randy, stop
that cryin'. Mama can't take it.

She goes on to sing him a LULLABY. A beat later, Julie
becomes a nuisance too, running around the kitchen table.

PATSY

Julie, you're gonna hurt yourself.

Said and done. Julie missteps and trips. Slams on the ground
and also starts crying. Leading Little Randy to cry harder.
It's a cacophony gnawing at Patsy like nails on a chalkboard.

PATSY

Goddamn it Julie. What did I tell you!

Patsy's a powder keg about to explode. YELLS -

PATSY

Charlie! ... Charlie! ...

No response. Goes into the--

LIVING ROOM

--where Charlie's in front of the TV, drinking a beer.

PATSY

Goddamn it Charlie, didn't you hear me?

CHARLIE

Didn't like your tone.

PATSY

These are your kids too.

CHARLIE

And I take care of 'em every time you're
on the road. Or at the recording booth.
Or god knows where, doing what, with
who. So now you're home, you take care
of 'em.

PATSY

I'm gettin' sick and tired of your
attitude. I should've met you sooner so
I could've left you sooner.

CHARLIE

Oh honey, we're the outlaw and the
cowgirl. Like it or not, we're in it
for the long haul.

Patsy boils and leaves the room in a huff. Charlie takes another sip of his beer.

KITCHEN

Patsy puts Randy on a baby chair, who's still throwing a fit. Then she sits on the floor and brings her knees to her chest. Starts shaking and crying.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - ANOTHER DAY

A DOCTOR finishes examining Patsy.

PATSY

Okay Doc, lay it on me.

DOCTOR

Well Patsy, you're in the throes of a nervous breakdown.

PATSY

What do I have to be nervous about?

DOCTOR

You're working too much and taking on too many responsibilities. Don't forget you're still recovering from the crash. You should count your blessing's.

PATSY

Blessin's ain't gonna feed the kids.

DOCTOR

Can't Charlie give a hand?

Patsy gives him one of those scoff-chuckles.

PATSY

That man ain't doin' a good *goddamn* unless it gets his throat tinglin'.

Doctor moves to his desk and grabs some pills from a drawer. Handing them--

DOCTOR

Here, this should help. But please take my advice. You need some R&R.

EXT./INT. RANDY'S PIPER COMANCHE PLANE - ANOTHER DAY

1962. Randy's Piper Comanche's soaring through the skies. Randy flies the plane. Patsy rides shotgun, mustering a faint smile.

PATSY

Flyin' to Pensacola for lobster on the beach. Just what the doc ordered.

RANDY

Works for me too. I need to get more experience flyin' this bird.

PATSY

Hoss, I got some news for you... I'm slowin' down.

Randy doesn't say anything. Louder -

PATSY

Did you hear what I said? I'm slowin' down!

RANDY

I heard you, Pats.

PATSY

So that's it, no argument?

RANDY

You're riding high. Demanding big money and getting it. You've had four hits in a row and Decca's banging the drums on your third album. Now's the time to work.

PATSY

We're rakin' it in alright, but there ain't a minute to spend it. I'm workin' more than I should and feelin' the worse for it. And I hate goin' on the road and leavin' my babies behind.

RANDY

Charlie can handle the kids.

Patsy scoffs. Shakes her head.

PATSY

...guess I was wrong after all.

RANDY

About what?

PATSY

Thought you were the only sane man in my life. But if you were, you'd know Charlie and I ain't surviving if I keep pushin' the kids on him.

RANDY

You and Charlie. He promises to stop drinking, but can't. You threaten to leave, but don't. Seems y'all are always through forever... *'till tomorrow.*

PATSY

By the time I make my mind to leave, my mind's already gone. Anyways, it's none of your business.

RANDY

Patsy, you are my business.

PATSY

Dollar signs are all I mean to ev'ryone, ain't that right?

RANDY

Now wait a goddamn minute! Didn't you tell me to keep you working so you could buy your dream home?

There's a beat. Patsy's tired, but knows this much to be true.

RANDY

Well, guess I also have some news for you too ...I found it.

PATSY

Found what?

RANDY

Your dream home. It's just what you wanted.

Patsy lights up.

RANDY

And remember that next time you complain about workin' too much.

EXT. GOODLETTSVILLE - ANOTHER DAY

Patsy and Charlie cruise around, their eyes scanning the area with great interest -

PATSY
It must be 'round here somewhere.

Charlie keeps driving and, *suddenly*, Patsy HOLLERS--

PATSY
Charlie stop the car. Turn around.
That's it, there it is.

Charlie makes a quick turn and parks. They get out and SEE-- a TRI-LEVEL HOUSE under construction-- red brick, with spanking white shutters, and a small portico with a laced wrought-iron support. It's love at first sight for Patsy.

PATSY (V.O.)
Just goes to show - if you wait long enough, if you work hard enough, if you sacrifice enough, if you keep your faith - it'll all come your way.

CHARLIE
How much did Randy say this is gonna cost us?

PATSY
30 thousand.

CHARLIE
That's that then. We can't afford it.

PATSY
I'll get Randy to book more big dates.
Nobody's gonna deny me my dream home.

MONTHS LATER

The house is built and Patsy and Charlie are moving into it. Walking in the door, with a proud look on her face--

PATSY
Here it is Charlie, after all these years, just like I wanted, the house that Vegas built -

CUT TO: A STILL PHOTO MONTAGE

Patsy throws herself into the decorations, designing every inch of the house in an 'American Heritage' style with lots of colonial furnishings. There's tacky murals and portraits, a large rug in the shape of a gold record, and an artificial magnolia tree with dozens of songbirds attached to it.

In the music room we also see a bar made of red padded Naugahyde with metal studs spelling out "Patsy and Charlie." And the whole thing's sprinkled with gold dust. It's a decadent vision of *nouveau riche* excess.

INT. PATSY & CHARLIE'S MANSION - LIVING ROOM - ANOTHER DAY

SEPTEMBER 8, 1962. CLOSE ON a banner that reads "HAPPY BIRTHDAY PATSY!" Confetti goes off. Charlie wheels a giant cake with 30 candles. A HAPPY BIRTHDAY CHANT takes over. The focus is on Patsy. Wearing a brown wig, lots of make-up, and a pleased smile.

PATSY (V.O.)

When I was 15, I was already 30. When
I got to 30, I finally got to be 15.

Patsy's ecstatic to be in her dream home with her favorite people. All celebrating *her*. *Her* life. *Her* accomplishments.

We scan the faces in the room: Connie and Loretta with their husbands; Mrs. Hensley holding the kids; Faron Young and Cowboy Copas playing the guitar... Almost everyone we've met up to this point adds to Patsy's special day. Patsy closes her eyes, blows the candles, and makes a wish...

LATER

Randy approaches Patsy, who's gabbing with Connie and Loretta.

RANDY

Sorry ladies, mind if I steal the
birthday gal for a moment?

PATSY

I think this is where the manager
gives his golden goose a present.

Connie and Loretta laugh. Randy pulls Patsy aside.

RANDY

It's a present alright. I got you the
Monte Carlo of the West, Patsy!

PATSY

(jaw hitting the floor)
You got me Vegas?

RANDY

A 35-day stint. It'll be the most
lucrative of your career.

PATSY
 (losing her jubilation)
 This is a great honor Hoss, but... I'm
 just a country gal. I can't compete
 with Elvis and the Rat Pack. People
 will hate me.

RANDY
 Nobody's gonna hate you.

PATSY
 I don't know...

RANDY
 Patsy, you're going to make \$1000/day.
 That's 35 large, enough to pay for
 this house in just a month. You can't
 afford to pass this up.

Off Patsy, convincing herself, we **CUT TO:**

FIRST, THE FANTASY

'62 VEGAS at its most glitzy and opulent: bright neon lights
 and decadent fireworks lighting up the city; Sinatra and Elvis
 crooning thousands; chips and cash pumping vigorously at every
 table; vaudeville spectacles with showgirls and circus acts...

THEN, THE COLD, HARSH REALITY

The Merri-Mint showroom isn't the Vegas Patsy imagined. It's
 tacky and seedy, and the CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS make the
 whole thing even sadder. Depressing.

INT. THE MERRI-MINT SHOWROOM - CHRISTMASTIME

In any other circumstance, Patsy would be the classiest thing
 to ever set foot in this showroom. Not today. Despite her
 posh and form-fitting evening gown, she looks bloated. Tired.
 Unhappy. And her eyes are caved in with bitterness. Patsy's
 performing, but her heart's not in it. *How could it be?* Her
 audience is composed of lonely drunks and junkies who either
 don't have family or are avoiding it.

INT. GREEN ROOM - LATER

Patsy wipes off her make up. If she looked rundown before,
 without it she looks even worse. Randy hovers behind her.

PATSY

I'll never do this again. Christmas is a time to be with your family, not in this Hellhole.

RANDY

It's not that bad.

PATSY

Makes me feel like a goddamn whore. Thank God we're going home Friday.

RANDY

Patsy, we're not going home Friday.

PATSY

What!?

RANDY

As soon as we finish here, we're doing one night at the Sahara. I just sewed it up.

Patsy grabs her DIET PILLS and pops a couple.

PATSY

Tell 'em thanks, but no thanks.

RANDY

It's already done.

PATSY

Goddamn it, I keep tellin' you I wanna slow down, that I gotta slow down. Doesn't it matter what I want?

Just then, a KNOCK at the door. A blast from the past emerges--

DON HECHT

Hello Patsy!

AN HOUR LATER

It's just Patsy and Don. In mid-conversation. Sharing a drink.

PATSY

...I know people who have schoolin' and all but don't have half my talent. Yet they seem to have ev'rythin' good happen without half-tryin'.

DON HECHT

Yeah, I seen that.

PATSY

All my life's been uphill. Even now.
Experience is a hard teacher, Don.
Gives ya the tests first--

DON HECHT

--and the lessons come after.

PATSY

Right. We owe each other a hell of a lot, don't we?

(he nods empathetically)

I've got a lil' travelin' to do and then I gotta rest. I'm not feelin' well. But I wan' you to prepare some songs for me. I don't give a damn what anyone says, you get me those songs and I'll make sure we get a number one record.

DON HECHT

(likes this very much)

I actually have a few in mind.

PATSY

And I also wanna record that ditty you wrote in '57. You remember the one?

DON HECHT

Cry Not For Me??

PATSY

That's the one. There's a story in that song about my life.

DON HECHT

It's a good song, but this ain't time for crying, Patsy. You've reached places hundreds of *would-bes* can only dream of.

PATSY

Don't kid yourself. Ev'ry time I've had what I wanted here--

(holds out the palm
of her hand)

--somethin' pulls the rug from under me-- *Sickness. Accidents. Hospital bills.* Even that son of a bitch McCall.

Don considers it, sees her point.

PATSY

But I ain't peddlin' a sob story. It's my lot in life and I accept it. But I need to do that song. Listen--

Patsy starts singing -

*Cry not for me / when I am far away /
there's nothing more to say / cry not
for me.*

DON HECHT

...you still remember the words.

PATSY

I sure do, Don. I don't forget
anythin' that has any meanin' to me.

INT. PATSY & CHARLIE'S MANSION - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

JANUARY, 1963. Patsy walks into the PITCH-BLACK room and pulls back the drapes. As she peers into the darkness--

PATSY (V.O.)

I started doin' some thinkin' and
realized I'd been fightin' so hard for
the future when all along 'twas the past
I was achin' for. This was my castle -
my blood, sweat 'n' tears - and now that
I had it, I hated it felt so empty.

CLOSE ON Patsy's eyes, turning a few shades darker. Noticing something. We look at what she's staring at - *down on the lawn* - but there's nothing there. At least, nothing WE can see. But maybe Patsy does. She even nods to 'it'. Then--

Patsy moves to the vanity desk and turns on a light, which forces us to notice two things - a collection of brown and blonde wigs, and a BLACK EYE. Patsy picks up the phone receiver next to her and makes a call -

PATSY

Hiya, it's the Cline. Can you come
over? ... yeah, it's important ...

HALLWAY/LIVING ROOM - LATER

The door opens to reveal Connie, who notices Patsy's face -

CONNIE

Oh Pat, that man's horrible.

Patsy starts walking towards the living room. Connie follows.

PATSY

Don't worry, it's just more of the same. A couple of nights in the big house will do him some good.

CONNIE

I don't understand why you don't divorce him already.

PATSY

It's not worth it now.

CONNIE

What do you mean 'now'?

Patsy opens a drawer and grabs her SCRAPBOOK. Hands it over--

PATSY

Here Hoss, I want you to have this.

(Connie freezes)

Go ahead, take it.

CONNIE

(reluctantly takes it)

...why?

PATSY

'Cause if anyone ever asks for my story, I want you to tell it. Warts 'n' all. Don't leave anythin' out.

Connie tries to give the book back.

CONNIE

Anyone asks for your story, you tell it.

PATSY

Connie, this ain't a discussion. We're great friends, ain't we?

CONNIE

The best.

PATSY

So there you have it. Oh, and open it - there's somethin' in there for ya.

Connie does. Finds an ENVELOPE. Inside-- a check for \$75.

PATSY

You can use it to pay rent.

In a split-second, Connie's taken to tears. Tears that have been waiting to come out for a while. Musters a--

CONNIE
H-how did you know?

PATSY
Do you still think there's anythin'
the Cline doesn't know?

CONNIE
I don't know what to say. Thank you,
I guess. But that doesn't feel right.
Or enough. Oh Patsy -

She hugs Patsy. Holds onto her flesh. Feeling her. Conveying her gratitude at the most primal level. When they let go--

PATSY
Don't thank me yet. I need somethin'
from you.

CONNIE
Anything.

Patsy moves towards the FIREPLACE.

PATSY
I been puttin' aside somethin' for a
rainy day. Somethin' that's just mine.
I don't want Charlie knowin' about it.

CONNIE
You got a stash?

Patsy carefully dislodges one of the bricks.

PATSY
Go on, take a peek.

Connie does - sees a hole filled with \$100 bills.

PATSY
Been puttin' money in there every
week. Don't you dare tell a soul.

CONNIE
I won't. But why are you telling me?

PATSY
In case somethin' happens. I wanna
make sure my kids are taken care of.
Can I count on you?

CONNIE
Of course. But Patsy, don't talk like
that. I don't like it.

PATSY

Like it or not, there you have it.
But remember, mum's the word.

INT. PATSY & CHARLIE'S MANSION - KITCHEN - 2 DAYS LATER

Charlie walks in with his tail between his legs. Finds Patsy handling a few pots and pans. Cooking something that sure smells good. This time, Patsy isn't emotional about Charlie. She just looks... *resigned*.

PATSY

Look what the cat dragged in. Enjoyed your vacation, Hoss?

CHARLIE

Patsy, honey, I'm--

PATSY

Yeah yeah, I know you're sorry.

CHARLIE

I really am. This won't--

PATSY

Ain't nothin' else to say, Charlie.
(turns away from him)
There's beer in the fridge if you wan'it.

He looks at her, hoping to say something that will fix it, that will change things. But there's nothing left to say...

INT. DECCA STUDIOS - RECORDING BOOTH/CONTROL ROOM - ANOTHER DAY

Charlie and Connie are in the control room alongside Owen Bradley, who leans into the mic--

OWEN BRADLEY

Are you ready, Patsy?

PATSY

Let's get on with it.

Patsy says it with her habitual brand of upbeatness and spunk, but her eyes reveal something deeper. A pit in her stomach. Behind Patsy, a TEN-PIECE STRING routine. Getting ready.

And a one, and a two, and--

The Musicians play the opening strings to FADED LOVE. Patsy holds Charlie's gaze. Peering into his soul.

Making him uncomfortable. Then comes her voice. Full of emotion. Full of heartbreak.

As I look at the letters that you wrote
to me / It's you that I am thinking of
/ As I read the lines that to me were
so dear / I remember our faded love...

Something starts happening in the studio.

Patsy's voice carries through and everybody starts getting emotional. But the rawness affects Patsy the most, as evidenced by the tears that start streaming down her face...

We PUSH IN on Charlie, taking it all in... trying to figure out why he feels this way... why it hits where it hurts the most... And then it just becomes too much... Suddenly, he can't breathe. Charlie leaves the control room in a hurry.

Patsy continues to sing. Giving everyone chills. When she's done, nobody seems to be able to speak. Everybody's spellbound. Speechless. Patsy looks around at their faces.

PATSY

What's the matter, wasn't any good?

INT. PATSY & CHARLIE'S MANSION - LIVING ROOM

MARCH, 1963. Landline RINGS off the hook. Patsy picks it up.

RANDY

Patsy, I have some bad news.

PATSY

I won't do Vegas again, Randy.

RANDY

It's not that. Joltin' Jack died.

INSERT - Joltin' Jack giving Young Patsy her very first shot to sing over the radio.

PATSY

(devastated)

Oh my God, what happened?

RANDY

Collision with a transport truck.
He's leaving behind a wife, two young
sons, and little money.

PATSY

That poor family. Is there anything I can do?

RANDY

Hap Peebles is organizing a benefit. Hawkins and Copas already said yes.

PATSY

Count me in.

RANDY

Problem is we'll be in New Orleans on Friday and Birmingham on Saturday. And I know how important your Sundays are.

PATSY

Hoss if you can get us there, I'll do the show.

RANDY

Okay. My plane can get us there with time to spare.

INT. RANDY'S PIPER COMANCHE PLANE - DAYS LATER

Patsy gazes out the window, a heavy look stamped on her face.

EXT. BENEFIT STAGE - DAY

The scene plays in silence. It feels like an ELEGY. With drawn out SLO-MO SHOTS of FANS being swept up by Patsy's evocative performance. Her features tensing up.

We PUSH IN as Patsy's emotions surface. *Building... consuming... overwhelming...*

Finally, Patsy lets go a few tears. And a few more after that. And soon enough, she's crying. Not just for this moment, but for the last year... the last ten years... for more than she even knows...

When she finishes the song, she gets a standing ovation. Patsy's deeply moved by the love of her fans. She's gotten reactions like these before, but this feels different. Special.

Patsy takes it in and clings to it. As if it's the last display of love she'll ever get...

INT. LITTLE ROCK DRYERSBURG AVIONICS STRIP - NEXT DAY

Patsy, Copas, and Hawkins wait miserably in a dingy waiting room. Stare out the window, hoping and wishing the dark clouds and the strong winds dissipate. They've been there for hours.

MR. BRAESE takes care of business behind the counter. Randy finishes using his phone. Turns to the guys, all excited--

RANDY

Just got off the phone with Nashville.
Skies are clear and you can even see
the stars. Time to hit the road.

Mr. Braese hears this and intercedes--

MR. BRAESE

Look east Mr. Hughes - see those dark
clouds? You're gonna be fightin' high
winds. Are you instrument-rated?

RANDY

Not yet.

MR. BRAESE

Figured that. You shouldn't go in
this weather. There's a good motel
nearby I can put y'all in.

RANDY

It's only 90 miles.

MR. BRAESE

You're takin' a big chance.

PATSY

How long will it be if we drive?

RANDY

Nobody's gonna drive. I'm gonna take
care. If I can't handle the weather,
I'll turn around. Let's go.

Everybody follows Randy onto the airstrip. Patsy lags behind, contemplating the clouds Mr. Braese warned them about.

INT. RANDY'S PIPER COMANCHE PLANE - DAY

PRESENT. In the backseat, Patsy addresses us--

PATSY

So that's it Hoss, the Cline story,
warts 'n' all.

The dark clouds inching closer catch Patsy's eye.

PATSY

Hey Randy, those clouds still don't look pretty. Can't we go around 'em?

RANDY

Will you stop your worryin'? If I see we're in trouble, I'll turn around.

Patsy's not convinced. Copas nudges her.

COPAS

What's wrong, Patsy? You keep talkin' about them clouds.

PATSY

I don't like 'em.

COPAS

Do you trust Randy?

PATSY

I just wanna get home to my kids.

COPAS

And this is the fastest way.

PATSY

I know. It's just that-- well, sometimes I get these feelin's.

Patsy's suddenly overwhelmed with emotions. Emotions she doesn't know where they're coming from.

PATSY

Lemme ask y'all somethin'. Have you thought about how you wanna be remembered when you go?

RANDY

What kind of spooky talk is that?

PATSY

C'mon, you're a man with enough horse sense. I know you have an answer.

RANDY

Well... I wouldn't mind being thought of as a savvy businessman who lived a long life and helped make the great Patsy Cline a big star.

PATSY

Always sellin'. What say you Cowboy?

COPAS

Heck, I don't know, Patsy. I just hope my family says I was a good father and the fans liked what I sang.

HAWKINS

I'm gonna go ahead and take his answer. It's a good one.

RANDY

What about you Patsy, how do you wanna be remembered?

A beat. Patsy thinks it over. Then--

SHE'S ASSAULTED BY IMAGERY. Imagery of Patsy's life leading up to this moment. It's a dream-scape of elegy and remembrance, a sweet and sour homage to a short life well lived, all layered to her recording of SWEET DREAMS -

Patsy battling rheumatic fever - Singing over Joltin' Jack's radio - Performing with Bill Peer at the Moose Lounge - Driving fast with Gerald - Recording at Decca for the first time - Going on the love merry-go-round - Fulfilling her dream of singing at the Opry - Forgiving her father - Settling down with Charlie - Receiving an ovation on the Arthur Godfrey Show - Reveling in being a mother - Getting into the brutal car accident - Having laughs with Connie and Loretta - Killing it at Carnegie Hall - Soaking the glitz, the glamour, and the love of her fans...

COPAS (O.S.)

You with us, Patsy? How do you wanna be remembered?

Patsy snaps out of it. Turns to the group -

PATSY

I just wan' people to think I did the best with what I had, and that when I sang other people's words, I did my damndest to sing 'em right.

RANDY

And callin' everyone 'Hoss'.

The guys laugh. Patsy tries to relax. Instead, she URNS TO US. For what's going to be the last time -

PATSY

Maybe music doesn't cure all wounds, but
 it sure cures enough. And the greatest
 thing is, no matter what happens, you'll
 always have it. It'll comfort you, and
 heal you, and make you full of the joys
 of spring. When's all said and done...
 there ain't nothin' better, Hoss.

Patsy sinks back into her chair as the plane disappears into
 the thick, dark clouds descending upon the mountains of
 Tennessee...

CRY NOT FOR ME plays. CUE END TITLES:

-- According to official reports, Randy's inexperience was
 the major factor leading to the plane crash that killed
 everyone on board.

-- Randy Hughes was 35. Cowboy Copas, 49. Hawkshaw Hawkins,
 41. And Patsy Cline was 30.

-- With two children to raise, Charlie Dick married singer
 Jamey Ryan in 1965. He never forgot Patsy, playing her
 records over and over, especially when he drank heavily.

-- Mrs. Hensley worked as a seamstress and made many dresses
 of Patsy's stage costumes. She continued to promote Patsy's
 legacy until she died of natural causes in 1998.

-- Owen Bradley is one of the chief architects of the
Nashville Sound, having made stars out of Brenda Lee, Loretta
 Lynn, Buddy Holly, and Gene Vincent.

-- Patsy is one of the greatest vocalists of all-time. Her
 outspoken fans include: Loretta Lynn, LeAnn Rimes, Linda
 Ronstadt, Cyndi Lauper, Lucinda Williams, Brandi Carlile,
 and Kacey Musgraves.

-- Patsy has sold 15 million records posthumously and her
 albums are still among the top five bestsellers for MCA.

Her music lives on...