

Troubadour

A MOTION PICTURE

Episode One
90 Minute Movie

An original screenplay by
Michael Johnathon

REG. NO. #I329069

Writers Guild of America, East

©2020 Rachel-Aubrey Music/BMI

PO Box 200, Lexington, Kentucky 40588 ph: 859-255-5700

Troubadour

For the better part of a century, millions of people have shown a genuine passion for rural, live audience broadcast shows. The Grand Ole Opry, Louisiana Hayride, A Prairie Home Companion, Austin City Limits and many more have become legendary landmarks in radio.

Taking a hint from this legacy, a struggling 30-ish songwriter decides to create his own live audience program in his small town and finds surprising success, but with great struggle.

This is the story of a songwriter trying to find his way through a collapsing music world, of his attempt to think outside the box while trying to support a pregnant, unhappy wife. It is the story of a small community of friends that help out his musical vision and a jealous, manipulative radio station owner that tries to take over his dream.

And it's the story of a young man who discovers the father he never knew.

The screenplay community is peppered with dozens of cameos by famous musicians from the folk, bluegrass, country, rock and roots music world:

Arlo Guthrie is the town VW mechanic.

Barry Abernathy as the father.

Emmylou Harris is the town doctor.

Tommy Emmanuel is the local instrument maker.

Steve Earle as the opinionated Mayor.

Roger McGuinn is the preacher.

And many more.

TITLE SEQUENCE ROLLS

*

Theme song "Troubadour" plays

EXT. SMALL TOWN, MIDWAY KENTUCKY, IN AUTUMN - AFTERNOON

Credits roll

The MUSIC plays as the CAMERA travels through a small Kentucky town.

We see the colorful leaves of autumn, quaint Americana storefronts, a classic old time Antique shop, a wood carved sign that reads "*Welcome To Historic Midway.*"

*

We see a music store with guitars, mandolins and banjos displayed through a window that reads "*Midway Pickin' Parlor & Fret Haus*".

*

We pass a cafe filled with people in conversation and see townspeople walking the sidewalk. Another man stands outside a Wine Shop as if waiting for someone. A teenage store clerk shows a colorful, handmade quilt to a young couple across the counter.

*

At exactly the same instant both heads turn. The CAMERA follows their gaze to a WRY OLD MAN, his hands rough with work and age, sitting on a park bench outside a barber shop carving on a piece of wood.

*

CUT TO:

EXT/ MAIN STREET - SAME AFTERNOON

The MUSIC continues as a slender man - HARSHA SEN - drives by in an old car. The vehicle, a tan Rambler convertible, is both vintage and well used, and we're not sure if it is a restoration in progress or an amazingly kept everyday working automobile.

Harsha's car glides up to the curb outside of the "*Midway Pickin' Parlor & Fret Haus*". Autumn leaves swirl around the roadside.

The proprietor, BOB, hustles out of the music store lugging an oversize upright bass followed by his son BEN carrying a cello. Ben hops over the door into the rear seat, Bob slides carefully into the front as instruments are piled onto Ben.

Bob waves at his wife MYRA who stands at the store entrance,
and they're off. *

CUT TO: *

As the theme MUSIC continues we see the colorful and scenic
autumn beauty of horses in an open field. Running, playing,
colts with their breath fog hanging in the crisp air grazing
next to their mothers, long wooden fences, elegant rock
fences and barns. *

CUT TO:

EXT/HIGHWAY / SAME AFTERNOON

A Silver Eagle tour bus travels toward us from down the
highway. Autumn colors from the roadside are clear and
bright. We see a SMALL BLUE CAR (*driven by Robynn*) attempt to
pass from behind and then give up. *

CUT TO:

EXT/COUNTRY ROADSIDE IN AUTUMN - SAME DAY *

We see a MAN in a flannel shirt and jeans, wearing an old
brown hat and carrying a guitar walking along a country road.
He passes the wooden carved "*Welcome to Historic Midway*"
sign. *

We see the BUS and the BLUE CAR on the interstate in the
distance. *

*

CUT TO:

EXT/SMALL AUTO SHOP - SAME DAY

As the MUSIC continues we see the grey wood-frame building of the town gas station and repair shop is ragged but well kept.

The sign on the window reads "*Volkswagons: Repaired and Sold*" and written underneath "*used LP's and Cassettes*" and another "*Massages Whilst U Wait*"

*

AUDIO CHANGE

*

The MUSIC we heard playing all of this time changes from our sound track to coming from an old cassette player in the garage as the young man in the flannel shirt and hat walks into the old auto repair shop.

*

The man is **BUCK SEEGER**.

*

He walks up to the garage entrance. We see a a photo hanging on the wall of a young long haired male standing in front of an old VW Micro bus.

We see red Volkswagen van in a garage of tools, tires and green plants hanging near the garage door. A guitar hangs on the wall next to a MAC TOOLS calender.

Under the van the mechanic whistles to the song but all we see are his legs sticking out from under the bus.

BUCK
Marlow! Yo, mechanic dude
(No Answer)

*

BUCK
Hey, is my ride ready?
(No answer)

*

BUCK places his guitar through the open side door of the van and slams the door shut loudly. We see up close as the shocked mechanic glides out from under the vehicle.

*

It is MARLOW, wearing denim coveralls and a baseball cap, played by folksinger **ARLO GUTHRIE**.

MARLOW

Man, you coulda given me a heart
attack

BUCK

How's my folkmobile

MARLOW

'bout as in tune as the mandolin on
your demo

Marlow gets up, wipes grease of on his smock and punches the
cassette player. The cassette pops out and he hands it to
BUCK.

MARLOW

I've listened to it three times.
Tell me they are all test mixes.

BUCK

Tell me my van is tuned better than
that mandolin

MARLOW

Have faith, kemosabe. I am one of
the few non-computerized analogue
automobile analysts left in
America.

BUCK

*(climbs into the van and starts the
engine)*

Hey, have you decided what to do
with that old church your aunt left
you?

MARLOW

Nope. I might turn it into a
holistic massage parlor

BUCK

I still think you should try that
cafe and music hall. What a great
place for concerts. You can name
the restaurant after your daughter.

MARLOW

Alice?
(*pause*)
What a stupid idea.

CUT TO:

EXT/COUNTRY LANE - SAME AFTERNOON

*

We see the red VW bus heading down a two lane country road past meadows and farmland.

We see a young 6 year old child in a school playground piling leaves up high to jump in them.

A tractor comes to a stop in an open field, freshly harvested hay fields shining golden in the sun. A farmer is framed in the cab window as he opens the door and steps down from a high-wheeled John Deere tractor, stark against the rich, golden landscape.

The farmer pulls a blue handkerchief from his overall pocket and wipes his brow.

He looks off into the distance across his field toward the highway and we see the SILVER EAGLE TOUR BUS followed by a small BLUE CAR on the horizon.

CUT TO:

EXT/DAY - ROBYNN IN HER BLUE TOYOTA

We see Robynn, a lovely woman in her early 30's, driving her older blue Toyota. Her long brown hair tosses around from the open window breeze. She is obviously in a rush and trying to pass the bus but her four cylinder car can't quit catch up. She looks irritated.

CUT TO:

INT/DAY - PASSENGER RIDING INSIDE THE BUS

*

The camera is looking out of the window as the autumn countryside speeds by. We see a BLUE TOYOTA try to pass by the window, then give up.

The camera pulls back as we see a lone PASSENGER in the plush tour bus (played by banjoist **BARRY ABERBATHY of the bluegrass band MOUNTAINHEART**), his left arm along the window, then down to his lap where we see a black book, a diary. *

Finally, the camera is close on his sunglasses, reflecting the road outside of the window. *

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY LANE - SAME DAY

ANOTHER ANGLE

Through the last traces of the afternoon farmland across a ploughed field we see Robynn in her blue Toyota pulling off the highway from behind the TOUR BUS. She drives up to her home, an old farmhouse in the country, and pulls up alongside BUCK's VW bus. *

She pulls out a brown grocery bag and lifts a sleeping child from his car seat.

CUT TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE LIVING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON - SAME DAY

Open close on a guitar headstock and the camera moves toward sound hole. BUCK is playing a gentle ballad, or trying to anyway. In the background of the soft guitar chords and finger picking is the growing sound of a woman's voice mixed with a screen door opening clumsily. *

ROBYNN (VO)

BUCK. Can you help *

BUCK *

(writing song)

"I know a lady ..."

The camera keeps pulling back and we see him sitting at a table in his living room. His hat is on the table in front of him, next to a writing pad with lyrics written on it.

ROBYNN (VO)
I need you for a minute

BUCK
(writing down)
"Who doesn't have any time to give
away ..."

*

As Robynn struggles to carry the groggy child - Little BUCK - and the sack of groceries, the FAMILY DOG, a small brown cocker spaniel named WOODY practically taking her feet out from under her with eager greeting, causing her keys to clatter to the floor.

*

ROBYNN
BUCK. Did you hear me?

*

(TO DOG)
Get down, Woody.

She puts the child on the floor next to her and picks up her keys.

CUT TO:

INT/LIVING ROOM

BUCK stays focussed on his song. It is a gentle ballad (*early theme of a song used later in the story called "WaterFall"*) in contrast to the chaotic, loud banging in the kitchen. He tries one more chord, then scribbles words on a piece of paper - before he forgets.

*

We see the dog, WOODY come up to the child and lick him on the face.

ANGLE INTO THE KITCHEN

ROBYNN
(shaking her head)
 Guess not...

BUCK
(from the other room)
 Do you need some help? *

ROBYNN
(dripping with sarcasm)
 Oh no. I've got it. Don't get up.

At that he stops, puts down his pencil and his guitar.

CUT TO:

INT/ FARMHOUSE/IN THE KITCHEN

Robynn unpacks the bag onto the counter. BUCK slides in behind, slipping his arms around her waist pretending to be oblivious to the groceries and toddler. *

BUCK
(playfully)
 Oh. I'm sorry. Did you need some help. *

A smile almost escaping, she slips away from his grasp to pick up the child and hands him the baby.

ROBYNN
 How's your song?

BUCK
 OK I guess, it was so darned quiet around here I couldn't concentrate. *

ROBYNN
 Any messages? My mom call?

BUCK
 Just the Doc's office. *

ROBYNN

Oh, for ...! I forgot.
(checking her watch)
 It's almost 6
 I'm late.

CUT TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE/BUCK AND BABY

*

CLOSE ON BABY'S FACE. BUCK lifts the baby in the air, who is happy to see his dad but also on the verge of a good cry.

*

BUCK

(to the baby)
 We got it under control. You want
 to walk around? No? We're not
 awake yet.

*

CUT TO:

EXT. FARMHOUSE DOOR - SAME DAY

CLOSE ON a hand knocking on the farmhouse front door. The door opens and Robynn's face appears looking out.

ROBYNN

Rehearsal time. Already? Oh joy.

Looking in, two band mates, young cellist **BEN SOLLEE** and bassman Bob, instruments at their sides like companions, smile in unison, making a path for the exiting Robynn.

Outside Hotlicks HARSHA SEN, his mandolin case in one hand, uses his sleeve to wipe a smudge off the car hood.

BUCK

Come on in, guys.

*

Harsha smiles at Robynn as she approaches.

HARSHA
Hey, beautiful!

ROBYNN
*(to Harsha as she walks
by)*
Get a girlfriend, Harsha.

We see Robynn walk down to the driveway past BUCK's van and Harsha's old Rambler as she get's into her small blue Toyota and drives off. *

CUT TO:

INT. BUCK'S LIVING ROOM - SAME *

The band assembles in the living room. BUCK sits on the couch with his guitar and his baby son. *

BEN
So, are we rehearsing or baby sitting?

BOB
(to the baby)
I see you're in a good mood.

HARSHA
What's up with Robynn? You didn't write her another love song ...

BUCK
(picking up the banjo)
Actually I was. But I got stuck right in between 'I'm a jerk" and "I'm irresponsible."

HARSHA
What rhymes with "Irresponsible" anyway.

BEN
How about, "Here's my tonsil."

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTORS OFFICE - LATER SAME DAY *

CLOSE UP: Into Robynn's open mouth as we see the doctors
tongue depressor. *

Robynn is sitting on an examination table. *

The DOC, played by **EMMYLOU HARRIS**, a photo of her dad hangs
on the wall, **DR. RALPH STANLEY**. She is a kindly but sharp
tongued, old-school hometown doc. She knows more about
everyone in town than anyone else. *

As a nurse leaves with a blood sample, Doc flips open a
silver clipboard. Robynn sits on the edge of the exam table
holding a small cotton ball against the inside of her elbow.

DOC

Well, the throat looks good. What
exactly are we in for, armed
robbery? *

ROBYNN

Know any good banks?

She ignores the comment, puts the stethoscope on her ears,
listens to her heart. Then he moves the listening end to her
back. *

DOC

Cough for me.

She coughs.

DOC

So, how are you feeling?

ROBYNN

Frustrated, alone, forgotten...

DOC

Good. Normal for a musician's wife.

ROBYNN

Don't get me started.

DOC

Sick to your stomach?

ROBYNN

Oh, you know.

DOC

Lie back for me...

She presses his hand to Robynn's abdomen.

*

DOC

Any dizziness?

(shakes her head, no)

Weakness, shortness of breath?

(on her look)

Other than the normal reaction to being in my presence.

ROBYNN

Actually, I have been feeling tired. A bit dizzy lately.

DOC

You seem pissed off. You ARE pissed off.

ROBYNN

I'm not pissed off, I'm frustrated.

(on his look)

Okay, pissed off.

DOC

Past post-partum pissed-offtness. I've seen many a case of it. How long have you been waiting for him to give up this music thing and get a real job?

ROBYNN

Let see ... We've been married for six years. So ... I guess about six years.

DOC

My guess, it's not nearly as romantic as you thought it would be. Not good for either of you, I'd think.

ROBYNN

Like he would notice.

DOC

I believe I warned you not to fall in love with a musician. Always listen to your doctor.

ROBYNN

Maybe if I had strings. Or frets. *

DOC

So the relationship might be needing a little tuning here and there.

ROBYNN

Tuning? How about a sledgehammer so I can get his attention? He always has time for everything...

DOC

And everyone... like the ladies? *

ROBYNN

No, not him. Not that. He better not, anyway.

DOC

Honey, I wouldn't worry. So far as I can tell, no one in the history of mankind ever learned the banjo to impress the ladies. *

Doc looks Robynn in the eye for a long moment. Places a kind hand on her shoulder. Looks her in the eye again.

DOC

Have you told him yet?

ROBYNN

Told him? About what?

DOC

The baby.

ROBYNN

He's baby sitting right...

(on DRs look)

Oh God.

(on DRs follow up look)

Oh God!

*

*

CUT TO:

INT. THE BUS PASSENGER - SUNSET

From close on the man's sunglasses we see the color's of the country side sliding past. We pull back and see the dark, stern and brooding expression of his unshaven face in the shadows.

*

*

*

Suddenly we hear a bang sound followed by the squealing of the bus as the wheels suddenly start to brake.

From close to the BARRY'S hands we see him close the book and slip it into the top of his duffle bag on the seat next to him.

*

With the camera CLOSE we notice that his LEFT hand is missing fingers and he only has part of a thumb. Still do NOT see his face.

*

*

CUT TO:

INT. EXT/ From front of Bus/TWILIGHT

*

From outside and through the windshield, we are close on the bus driver's face. We see him look out his rear view mirror and turn the wheel. He is obviously pulling over and something is wrong.

BUS DRIVER

(Calling out to Barry)

Damn, ten minutes away and then this. Damn.

*

CUT TO:

INT/ Bus/SAME Day

We see CLOSE on the back tire of the bus, flat and throwing rubber, smoke beginning to emit stronger and thicker as the bus comes to a full stop.

CUT TO:

EXT/ BUS/SAME Day

From the road we look up through the bus doors as the driver sits in his seat, cell phone up to his ear.

BUS DRIVER
Yeah ... Hang on a sec.

TO BARRY *
You gonna be OK? That's a good 15
mile walk.

Angle from behind Barry looking up to the DRIVER *

BARRY *
Tell the boys when you see them,
thanks for the lift. Tell 'em take
care on the road.

CUT TO:

EXT/ Road and Bus/ DUSK

As the bus door closes we see the man's good hand as he puts his sunglasses in his shirt pocket. We are VERY CLOSE to his bad hand as he picks up his army duffle bag. *
*

CUT TO:

EXT/ DUSK-SUNSET - SCENES OF MIDWAY.

We see boys in a field playing baseball with hats on in the crisp late afternoon air. The sun is setting behind them, filling the sky with the blazing colors of red and orange as it descends beyond the horizon.

A man pulls into his driveway after work, the sunset gleaming gold on his car windshield, greeted by a wife and baby

A shop keeper closing down his store, locking the front door and walking down Main Street.

We see Barry come up to a wooded lot. He looks up at the quickly approaching night sky and puts down his bag. He hangs on the roadside a bit, as if wanting to hitchhike but no cars come his way. *

He turns and walks into the woods, disappearing into the darkness of autumn colors of the brush and trees.

CUT TO:

INT. BUCK'S LIVING ROOM - DUSK *

BUCK and FBO are in the thick of rehearsing a song, GO LADDY GO. The orange glow of sunset pours through the living room window and reflects off the instruments. They are playing a bright, up-tempo banjo tune. *

We see the BABY sitting in a bouncy chair in the living room doorway jumping up and down to the song.

After the song the band rips the SONG arrangement apart.

HARSHA

It's too thick. We're all playing on top of each other.

BEN

It was like one long lead.

BOB

That means we're playing jazz.

BUCK *

A great musician can play anything, a great artist knows when not to play.

Band stops, looks at BUCK.

*

HARSHA
You gotta be kidding.

BEN
Alright, one more time.

CUT TO:

EXT/ FARMHOUSE DRIVEWAY - sunset

As the last rays of sunset disappear over the tree tops, Robynn pulls into the farmhouse driveway, stops her car and listens to the MUSIC coming from inside her home. She is troubled by the news of her pregnancy.

CUT TO:

INT/ LATER THAT NIGHT IN THE FARMHOUSE

It is quiet in the farmhouse. Robynn leans over the crib and kisses her sleeping son, all cozy and cuddled up in a blanket. She turns off the light on the bed stand and walks out of the room, closing the door behind her but not all the way, enough for the lights in the rest of the house to slice into the darkened little bedroom.

CUT TO:

INT/NIGHT LIVING ROOM

BUCK is on the couch talking to NIKKI on his phone about a couple of bookings coming up

*

BUCK

How big is the venue? Really ... Do you think we can fill it? 200, that's a lot a seats in some places. I guess ... Let me call the guys and make sure we are all available first. OK ... sure

*

He turns off the phone and lays it on the light stand next to the couch, leans back on a pillow and rubs his eyes.

BUCK

I am so tired ... I think we have three more bookings next month. You coming to the show tomorrow?

*

ROBYNN

I don't know, I have to help mom pretty early. Maybe if I have the time.

BUCK

Well, I miss you being there. It's been a while

*

Robynn doesn't reply, just sits next to him on the couch and pulls the newspaper toward her. BUCK lays one of his legs on her lap and she starts rubbing the top of his foot as she reads.

*

CUT TO:

EXT. - NEXT MORNING ... SCENES OF A BEAUTIFUL AUTUMN
(to gentle mandolin and guitar music)

BEAUTIFUL SCENES OF AN AUTUMN SUNRISE IN MIDWAY as we follow BUCK's van.

*

Rolling hillsides and meadows around Midway. Homes with fireplaces burning and wood smoke coming out of the chimney. A farmer opening up his big wooden barn door.

We see a milkman (*remember those guys???*) Setting down a clanking delivery of milk bottles on a front porch.

A woman jogging down the empty and quiet Main Street of Midway as BUCK'S VW BUS passes by. *

A thoroughbred standing in a field with its colt nearby, their breathe hanging in crisp morning air and we see BUCK'S RED VW BUS gliding down the road. *

INT. - NEXT MORNING - BEN'S BEDROOM

We follow a morning sunbeam from a window into a bedroom.

We are CLOSE on a digital alarm clock glowing through the sunbeam that says "7:15" and it goes off with a jolt.

We are CLOSE on BEN'S face laying on a pillow, eyes closed. He turns away from the camera with the alarm clock sound

We are above BEN'S bed as he sits up, sheets tangled all around. The CAMERA pulls back to see the worlds coolest musician's bedroom ... Cellos and guitars and banjos and gear and posters and stacks of CDs.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE IN THE WOODS - MORNING

BARRY is waking up under a tree in an isolated wooded area. He obviously spent the night outside. From ground level we see his eyes open, his bad hand rubs the sleep away. *

WE DO NOT SEE HIS FACE.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOMER LEDFORD'S WORKSHOP

BUCK's van pulls up to a quaint clapboard house with pumpkins *
on the porch. A sign on the post, hand carved from wood *
reads:

"Homer Ledford's Real Old-Time Instruments"

CUT TO:

INT. HOMER'S WORKSHOP

We are inside Homer's workshop. **Homer is played by Australian** *
guitarist TOMMY EMMANUEL. You should be able to almost smell *
the walnut and maple wood and the linseed oil. The shop is *
cluttered and active. Homer is an older man, thin and *
friendly. About as down home humble as you can get. *

BUCK is holding up one of Homer's hand made mandolins, *

BUCK *

My god ... It's beautiful

HOMER

Beautiful as an October morning.
And about as bright. She'll play
loud. That thin bracing makes it
tight as a gnats butt on an ice
cube.

BUCK *

I love it.

BUCK pulls out some bills from his pocket and places the *
money on the workbench. *

BUCK *

Here's the first \$100. I'll keep *
more coming as I get it. *

BUCK strums the mandolin and listens to the clear ring of the *
wooden instrument. *

BUCK *
Listen to that ...

HOMER
And don't be afraid to wup it. Play
it loud.

BUCK *
Last time I waited this long for
something Robynn was pregnant

HOMER
Well, to be honest I feel like I
gave birth on this one. You gonna
use it on that radio show?

BUCK *
Give me a chance the learn to play
the thing first ...

CUT TO:

INT. ROBIN'S MOM / "MIDWAY BED & BREAKFAST" - MORNING

VARIOUS GUESTS have gathered for breakfast in the dining room
of an old Bed & Breakfast.

Two long tables are laden with crocks of scrambled eggs,
slabs of fried country ham, bacon, steaming home-made
biscuits covered with a red and white checkerboard napkin,
pots of hot coffee, woven baskets filled toast and a variety
of pastries.

Robynn helps her mother, ELAINE SMITH (**KATHY MATTEA**), the *
owner of the Bed & Breakfast by placing food on the tables. *
Little BUCK sits in a highchair in the corner, happily *
stuffing a banana into his mouth.

We see a framed photo of Robynn, BUCK and the baby hanging on *
the wall next to a picture of BUCK on stage holding the baby. *

In their easy movements and casual comments to guests, we see
both are at home with these tasks. Mrs. Smith is refined but
not fancy, a very pretty woman and friendly, plain speaking
with a sense of humour.

At the tables, a diverse array of guests create a beautiful chaos of conversation, exchange courteous smiles and comment on the days news and horse sales.

MOM

Is corn low carb or high calorie?

ROBYNN

Are you on a diet again?

GUEST 1

Is there a bookstore nearby?

ROBYNN

Just around the corner.

MOM

(to Robynn)

What is a carb anyway? Your father would talk about carbs when he was fixing the car.

GUEST 2

(Irish accent)

What time does Keenland start? *

MOM

Depends ... around eight, the good races run in the afternoon.

ROBYNN

If you like corn just eat it, dad wouldn't know the difference anyway. He won't care.

MOM

I miss the old days when carbs were car parts and gay just meant you felt happy. Are you all coming for Sunday dinner *
*
*

ROBYNN

Can't. Rehearsals, you know.

MOM

All that practicing. You'd think they would figure those songs out by now. *

ROBYNN

BUCK's always writing new ones. *
He's working on one today.

MOM

Another song about you, I'm sure.
You don't sit in on the rehearsals
like you used to.

ROBYNN

Not too much ... I've been really
busy

GUEST 4 holds up an empty coffee pot, heads for the kitchen.

MOM

(smiling)

Let me get that for you. You sit
down. Eat your breakfast.

Robynn wipes little BUCK's face and watches her mother on her way to the kitchen. She pauses as if trying to decide whether to say something but changes her mind and tends to the breakfast. *

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE IN THE WOODS - MORNING

Barry sits up under a tree in an wooded area. Leaves and small brown grass stick to his cheeks which he brushes away with his injured hand. *

He stares at his hand and we see finally a close examination of his injury and handicap.

He pulls a small prescription bottle out from his duffle bag and takes a couple of pills, which he swallows dry. His face is obscured to us by his hand. *

We see CLOSE on his feet as he pulls a boot on with his good hand, then the other boot.

CUT TO:

EXT. VW VAN BREAKS DOWN ON SIDE OF ROAD, MORNING

BUCK stands outside of his bus, pulled off to the shoulder of the road. Slamming the door shut, he goes to the rear of the VW and lifts the engine door, still slightly smoking. *

BUCK
Marlow, Marlow, Marlow *

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE ALONG MAIN STREET - EARLY MORNING - CAFE

BUCK is walking along the road carrying his leather mandolin gig bag over his shoulder as he is heading onto Main Street. *

He see's the Midway Cafe, a little bakery and coffee shop, and walks in.

Terasita Sanchez is the only waitress in the cozy, crowded Cafe. She busily takes care of the three tables of customers as BUCK comes in the front door. *

BUCK
'morning, Terasita. Ever get any of those English muffins in? *

TERASITA
Is not on the menu. Only hamburgers, deli sandwich and de Hot Brown. Coffee and bagel in the morning. You take de cream? *

BUCK walks behind the counter and pours his own coffee, slaps a buck on the counter and walks off with a wave. *

Coming out of the coffee shop, he swings his gig bag over his shoulder while holding his coffee, he sees the figure of a man, Barry, walking into town from out of the morning fog. *

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET - MID MORNING - PAPER GIRL

A teenage girl peddles her bike down Main Street, tossing papers into each yard and on every store front entrance.

She passes by a SMALL HOUSE on a corner along side a railroad track, lush trees full of brightly colored leaves, a glass window that reads "WoodSongs Productions" a small wooden sign also reads "*Welcome to the Nut House*"

A newspaper hits the front door.

CUT TO:

INT. BUCK'S WOODSONGS OFFICE - MID MORNING

BUCK's rustic office is a tornado of organized chaos. A poster on the wall reads WOODSONGS OLD-TIME RADIO HOUR. Pictures of BUCK and the Folkboy Orchestra in action are on the wall.

The big clock on the wall says "10:12"

BUCK walks in with his banjo over his shoulder and coffee cup in hand.

BUCK
Am I late?

NIKKI cups her hand over a phone, waiting to ask a question, KC pulls BUCK toward a monitor to look at a video edit, BRYAN holds up about a dozen messages fanning them out.

He puts his coffee cup on a desk top. BUCK holds up his hands in mock-surrender. Everything freezes for an instant.

BUCK
Good morning.

Bedlam breaks out again as NIKKI, a plain spoken but caring black woman about 50 years old, puts the phone down and grabs BUCK by the elbow. *

NIKKI
We have a problem.

VOLUNTEER
BUCK, Harsha is on the phone *

BUCK
O goody. A problem on show day, how unusual. *

NIKKI
The problem is, I'm still not your manager. And you need me. Even though I'm too good for you.

BUCK
I don't need a manager. I can't afford one. *

NIKKI
(holding up a magazine)
I have two words for you. COVER. INTERVIEW. Before the show.

BUCK
That's ... Five words. *
(takes the copy of Banjo Magazine)
I would pick a manager who could at least count.

NIKKI
What ever. We also have too many reservations for tonight.

BUCK walks away from Nikki toward his desk reading the magazine as he puts down his banjo. *

BUCK
It'll be ok *

NIKKI
That's more people than we have seats.

BUCK
(as he picks up the phone)
 It'll be fine

*

NIKKI
 The President has banned banjo
 playing again.

BUCK
 Take a pill, Nikki

*

*

BUCK
(into the phone)
 ... Yo, Hotlicks

*

*

CUT TO:

EXT. MUSIC STORE - MID AUTUMN MORNING - SAME DAY

Bob and Myra sit on a park bench outside of their Main Street music store, enjoying the bright morning sunshine sharing the morning paper. Their conversation is peppered by some mighty fine guitar and banjo picking coming from inside the store.

*

MYRA
 Beautiful morning

BOB
 Hm, hmm

MYRA
 He sure can play

BOB
 Oh yeah

MYRA
 He's been at it for almost a half
 hour

BOB
 Nice reading music.

Myra puts down her paper and gets a little snappy.

MYRA

Is he gonna buy the thing or move
into the store?

BOB

Time to go inside.

CUT TO:

INT / MUSIC STORE

Young Ben stands behind the counter, head in hands as he
stares earnestly at a large man on a stool in front of a wall
of acoustic instruments, some new and some vintage.

His dad walks into the store from outside and stands next to
his son behind the counter, watching the men play. It is
bluegrass great **DAN TYMENSKI and RON BLUCK from AKUS.**

*
*

CUT TO:

INT. MUSIC STORE - SAME DAY

We start CLOSE on Dan's hands as his fingers fly across the
fretboard, picking away on the guitar. The camera pulls back
as he smiles at Bob and calls out:

*
*

DAN

Go get that doghouse

*

Bob reaches for the large upright bass leaning against the
wall and starts keeping a back beat to Dan's playing. He nods
toward the mandolin in Don's hands and says:

*

BOB

It's for sale, you know ...

CUT TO:

EXT. MUSIC STORE - MID AUTUMN MORNING - MIDWAY

As the MUSIC plays on, Myra sits on a park bench outside of their *Midway Pickin' Parlor & Fret Haus* music store, enjoying the bright morning sunshine.

Her enjoyment is interrupted by the sight of a tall, menacing-looking man walking past her along the opposite side of the street. It is BARRY from the bus walking into town, dressed in an army shirt and carrying his duffle bag. *

CUT TO:

INT. MUSIC STORE - SAME DAY

Don keeps picking away as Bob looks out the store window. We clearly see the PASSENGER through instruments hanging in the big store front window walking on the sidewalk past them from across the street. Bob looks over at Ben, who joins in now on his cello.

BOB

BUCK just got his this morning from
Homer *

DON (WHILE PLAYING)

When is BUCK gonna book me on that
radio show of his. *

BEN

I don't know ... let's ask him.

CUT TO:

EXT. MARLOW'S GAS STATION - SAME DAY

Marlow is outside his repair shop as a pickup pulls in towing BUCK's red VW van. As he is wiping his oily hands with a towel he notices the stranger walking along the street. A car drives up to the gas pump. *

CUT TO: *

INT. CAFE - SAME DAY

Terasita is ringing up a customer as she looks out the plate glass window of the cafe and sees BARRY walking down the sidewalk.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIDEWALK BENCH ON MAIN STREET

Two older men in idle conversation stop as they stare at BARRY walking past them. One man gently elbows the other and points after he walks past.

CUT TO:

INT. DOCS OFFICE - SAME DAY

Doc is on the phone with a patient. Her conversation stops as she sees BARRY the dark PASSENGER walking past her office.

DOC

Hang on a second, there, Elvie.

She walks to the window and stares out in quiet disbelief. She takes off her glasses, cleans the lens with her collar and puts them on again. Shaking her head says:

DOC

Well, I'll be ...

CUT TO:

EXT. MIDWAY BED AND BREAKFAST - SAME DAY

Barry stops in front of the BED & BREAKFAST. We see from behind him as he faces the doorway. He hears the music coming from the store and turns around.

We see his injured hand resting on top of the duffle bag, MAKING MOVEMENTS as the music plays.

CUT TO:

EXT / MYRA'S PARK BENCH - SAME DAY

Myra's viewpoint - we see the stare toward the MUSIC STORE
from behind his dark glasses

BARRY listens to the music and then we see CLOSE on his lips *
as he spits on the sidewalk. He turns and walks into the
MIDWAY BED AND BREAKFAST.

CUT TO:

EXT / ON PARK BENCH OUTSIDE THE MUSIC STORE

MYRA

How rude

*

CUT TO:

INT/DAY BED AND BREAKFAST

Robynn and her mom are clearing plates and clutter from the
breakfast table. All the guests are gone and the house is
empty. A clock on the mantle says "10:30"

MOM

God bless the fall sales at *
Keenland. This place gets so busy *
this time of year

Robynn begins wiping the great wooden table with a cloth.

MOM

Is it me or are you unusually quiet

ROBYNN

Sorry mom, just pre-occupied.

MOM

I guess BUCK has a show tonight at the Theatre. It's so exciting, it's growing so fast.

*

ROBYNN

It's a lot of work.

MOM

All that writing and singing and organizing. And traveling around like he does. How does he find the time

ROBYNN

Oh ... he sure manages. There, the table sparkles again.

*

MOM

Well, it's nice to have all this music in the family. Sweetie, why don't you just go and enjoy the day, I'll finish up

ROBYNN

We're almost done

We see Little BUCK, head cocked forward, asleep in a high chair in the corner. Little toys lay on his chair table and a teddy bear is snuggled up in his arm.

*

We see Robynn look at her sleeping baby and a softness comes over her face. We watch her hand as the camera comes close to her lower arm as she rubs her hand across her belly. The CAMERA stays close on her hand on her belly as:

MOM (VO)

Oh, I didn't see you standing there. Can I help you?

CUT TO:

INT. HARSHA SENS EYE EXAM OFFICE - EARLY AFTERNOON

HARSHA SEN is an Eye doctor. His office is next to Doc's on Main Street.

On his wall next to an EYE CHART hangs a MANDOLIN. He is busy examining a patient, a pleasant woman in her 50's in an examination chair.

HARSHA
How's this?

PATIENT
Still blurry. Better maybe.

HARSHA
(changes the lens wheel)
Does this help?

PATIENT
Yes, better. Oh, my. I can see. So clearly!

Harsha takes the lenses away.

HARSHA
Great. We'll have the glasses fixed up for you by this afternoon.

PATIENT
I'm coming the to show tonight. My goodness, I'll finally be able to see you on stage clear like. I'm bringing my daughter. She's single, you know

HARSHA
I know

PATIENT
We need to get you fixed up Dr. Sen, being a doctor and all. And a musician. You can't be having dinner every night alone. We need to get you fixed up.

HARSHA
I'm fine. Really.

Leans her back against the chair again.

HARSHA
 One more test, OK? Look straight
 into my eyes.

HARSHA TURNS ON A BRIGHT LIGHT OVER HIS HEAD. WE WATCH FROM
 THE PATIENTS POINT OF VIEW AS THE SCREEN FILLS WITH THE WHITE
 LIGHT.

We hear:

NIKKI (VO)
 Is Raymond going to open this door
 or not? *

We hear keys jingling and the rumbling of a door.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. INSIDE KENTUCKY THEATRE - SAME AFTERNOON

The BRIGHT BLINDING SUNSHINE pours in from the outside as a
 door opens. We see from inside the dark entrance as the
 Theatre security man, RAYMOND, a small fellow about 55,
 unlocks the door. *

The door opens and the flood of light hits the camera. NIKKI,
 BRYAN and several volunteers are outside the back door of the
 old Kentucky Theatre.

They come in the entrance, turn on the lights, open up
 storage doors and begin dragging out speakers and mixing
 boards.

NIKKI
 Here we go again

BRYAN
 Show 533. Who'd a-thunk it. *

NIKKI

Who'd a-thunk it would be sold out again. Hundred's of people lining up to get tickets to see artists they don't know sing songs they never heard before.

*

KC

Who's on tonight?

NIKKI

We have a blues player from Ireland and a hammer dulcimer duo from Ohio. Here's the stage plot from Darth.

BRYAN

You still love it?

NIKKI

I do. Been around music since my daddy played blues. I surely do.

BRYAN

But you don't play

NIKKI

Never took the time. Too busy raising a family and running after a husband. Takes a lot of time to be a wife

BRYAN

I guess. Well, you get to be around a lot of music now. Must be nice to be retired and all.

NIKKI

Only if we get this stage set up. Come on now. We have 450 radio stations and a million listeners. Idle chatter is over.

*

BRYAN

(takes the fax in hand, looks over the stage and pile of gear)

OK,, people. Let's move.

*

CUT TO:

INT. WOODSONGS OFFICE - EARLY AFTERNOON

Alone in the office, BUCK sits at a wooden desk, cluttered and piled high with mail and papers. On the wall behind him is an autographed photo of Pete Seeger hanging next to pictures of Robynn and the baby. He seems relaxed while on the phone with Bob, holding his new mandolin in his lap. *

BUCK *

You should hear this mandolin ...
If it could complain and spend all
my money I'd marry it *

BOB

Sound like a good one. What are you
still sitting around for?

BUCK *

Everyone's at the theatre ... I'm
heading home to change and get my
Martin.

BOB (V.O.)

You want me to pick you up?

BUCK *

Well, supposedly the van works but
I walked here this morning.

BOB (V.O.)

Be ready about 4. I was going to
ask you - how's the next album
coming. *

BUCK *

Still working on it. I think the
money is there but it's gonna be
tighter than a gnats butt on an
icecube.

BUCK reaches on his desk for messages. We see one on top that
says, "B, call Doc when you have a chance" *

BOB *

Just don't tell Myra you bought
that mandolin somewhere else. *

(MORE)

BOB (cont'd)
 By the way, some real strange
 looking cat is staying at your
 mother-in-laws.

BUCK *
 I think I saw him this morning *
 walking into town. Hey, I gotta get
 goin'.

BOB (V.O.)
 Hang in there, my friend.

BUCK *
 You know what the Doc says, Those
 with no patience usually become
 one.

CUT TO:

INT. WMID STUDIO - AFTERNOON - SAME DAY *

DJ sits behind the mic at his studio desk. It is the hometown
 NPR station run by a clash of corporate bureaucrats and
 hippie music types.

The DJ, MALCOLM, is a hippie type wearing a shirt and tie
 tucked into colorful sweat pants. He wears bright rewd
 sneakers. He has a half dozen Styrofoam coffee cups and a
 clutter of papers around his mic. *

He pours himself another cup of coffee as he is interviewing
 the MULLET SISTERS, two Hammer Dulcimer players with mullet
 haircuts that are appearing on tonight's WoodSongs show.

His interview style is absent minded and rarely, if ever, to
 the point. In other words, he interviews people without
 really listening to them.

MALCOLM *

(COMING OUT OF A RECORD)
 That's the sound of Neil Young on
 WMID, The Voice of Midway. We have *
 two lovelys in our studio, guests
 on tonight's WoodSongs taping. The
 Mullet Sisters from Ohio ... They
 play hammer dulcimers. So, ladies,
 what exactly is a hammer dulcimer,
 anyway.

CINDY

A pretty sounding old time mountain instrument. You play it with two small mallets. Would you like to hear it?

*

MALCOLM

Sure thing. Let's take a music break first. Here's a tune from Michelle Shocked ...

*

CUT TO:

*

INT. BED AND BREAKFAST, BARRY'S ROOM - SAME DAY

*

BARRY is alone in his room. He looks into his bag and pulls out his few clothes. He arranges things on his small dresser and reaches back into his bag. He pulls out his small black book and sits on the bed. Sighing heavily, he opens the book ... Reaches for the phone ... Then places it back down. He walks to the window and stares across the street over to the music store.

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

CUT TO:

INT. MUSIC STORE - AFTERNOON - MYRA & BEN

Ben is behind the counter in front of register, guitars and instruments hang behind him. Ben completes an entry into the store ledger, slams the book shut as if in a rush and grabs his cello.

*

*

BEN

Gotta run, Mom. Showtime

MYRA

See you at the Theatre, babe. Tell dad I'll bring the crew some Swedish meatballs and pasta sauce for snacks.

She calls out as Ben heads out the door.

MYRA

And watch your intonation.

*

CUT TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN - AFTERNOON - SAME DAY

As the INTERVIEW plays on a counter top radio BUCK is at the kitchen table with his guitar trying to finish writing as he is putting his shirt on at the same time. Obviously multi-tasking. The WMID interview is audible on the small radio on the kitchen counter.

*

*

WMID RADIO (VO)

... You're listening to The Voice
of Midway, Hometown Public Radio.

*

(song by Hank Williams starts)

*

CUT TO:

INT/FARMHOUSE - AFTERNOON

The baby sits next to his dad in a high chair, quietly watching his father and his guitar. In the background we hear a vacuum cleaner. Every time BUCK starts the writing or singing the sound of the vacuum cleaner gets louder and closer.

*

CUT TO:

INT. FARMHOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Robynn is vacuuming a small 8 by 10' carpet over and over and over again. BUCK comes to the doorway and looks at his watch, then his wife.

*

BUCK

You've been at that poor little
carpet for 20 minutes. You're gonna
wear it out.

*

ROBYNN

The carpet isn't the only thing
wearing out in this house.

BUCK

Sounds like we need to get a baby
sitter and go out to dinner.

ROBYNN

I need a new vacuum cleaner

BUCK

What's wrong with this one?

ROBYNN

It doesn't collect dust. It sends
dust in the air and it's unhealthy.

BUCK

Honey, that carpet is so worn out
there's hardly any fabric left to
it, no less dust.

ROBYNN

I want a Rainbow Vacuum cleaner. It
protects the house from dust.

BUCK

I think you need a hug.

ROBYNN

I'll trade a hug for a new vacuum
cleaner. It will protect the baby
from dust.

BUCK

Robynn, we only have this little
throw rug. Let's go get dinner in
Lexington tonight after the show.

ROBYNN

You'd spend the money if you needed
a new guitar.

BUCK

I make a living with a guitar, not
a carpet sweeper. Why, how much
does a Rainbow cost?

ROBYNN

\$1,500

BUCK

The rug only cost \$50!

ROBYNN

And the baby's health not important enough?

BUCK

Geez, calm down ... look. You know money is tight. It's like your making some kind if point that I don't earn enough. Maybe we can find a used one cheaper.

ROBYNN

A used one? I don't have time to argue, BUCK. Would you play a used guitar?

BUCK

It IS used, baby ... It's vintage.

CUT TO:

INT. WMMIDY STUDIO - AFTERNOON - SAME DAY

Malcolm finishes off his cup of coffee as the song fades. The Mullet Sisters look eager but ignored, waiting for their turn again. One of the sisters, Kathy, looks bored and is staring out of the studio window toward the street below.

MALCOLM

(as record fades)

And that was Hank Williams. They don't write 'em like that anymore. We're here with the Mullett Sisters, hammer dulcimer enthusiasts from Ohio. You can catch them at tonight's WoodSongs taping. So, did you get your name from your haircuts?

KATHY

What?

CINDY

Actually, that is our name

MALCOLM

Mullett? Really? And why are you so passionate about the Hammer Dulcimer. Why not, say, the drums.

(MORE)

MALCOLM (cont'd)
 Yet another instrument performed
 while holding a stick.

CINDY
 The hammer dulcimer has a
 completely different sound from a
 drum

KATHY
 Totally. Would you like to hear?

MALCOLM
(as he pours another cup of coffee)
 And we'll get to that in a minute.
 Right now let's check out our
 Community Calender ...

*
 *

CUT TO:

INT/ JD CROWE, BEN AND THE BARBERSHOP

A quaint old barber shop off Main Street, with the red and white barber pole next to the door, a park bench outside on the sidewalk and big glass windows.

Hand painted in nice lettering on the front window:

JD's Quick Stop
 Barber Shop
 Follicle Accelerations
 &
 Toupee Adjustments

*

Inside the barbershop are two chairs, long wooden benches, lots of green plants. A Gibson Mastertone hangs on the wall as well as several photos of men with perfect hair, including DEL McCOURY, RICKY SKAGGS and actor CHAD EVERETT.

An old, wood panelled Victrola CD player has bluegrass music pouring out of the speakers.

Ben comes to the barbershop to get his hair trimmed before the show. The proprietor and hair stylist is Grammy winning banjo master **JD CROWE**.

*

MARLOW, wearing his baseball cap and holding an ALE 8 bottle, is staring at the wall photos waiting for his haircut.

BEN
Afternoon, Mr. Crowe

JD
Young Ben the cello player! Is it clipping time already?

BEN
Show tonight. Gotta look good. Hey Marlow.

JD
Gotta look good for all those young girls. I remember it well. Mr. Marlow, I believe you're up first

Marlow sits in the barber chair as JD drapes an apron over him. He takes a last swig of the ALE 8

JD
Guess you boys are pretty pleased with how the music and the radio show is going.

MARLOW
Just an inch

BEN
Oh yeah. It's fun. BUCK wants to go on tour after the new record is finished. *

JD
I recall the excitement. Pretty expensive to make a good album. Got the money?

BEN
Working on it. BUCK's always working on it. *

MARLOW
Just an inch, JD

JD
I recollect that part too. I don't envy him ... You got yerself a pretty girlfriend yet?

BEN
Working on it, always working on it.

MARLOW

Are you two gonna talk all day or
do I get my hair trimmed?

WE ARE CLOSE to Marlow as JD lifts off his baseball cap and a huge mane of grey hippy-hair comes cascading down his face.

CUT TO:

INT/ MIDWAY CAFE

We start CLOSE on an old-time shelf radio and pull back to see the busy cafe.

(volume of the radio reduces but still heard clearly)

WMID VO

"... The Fireman's Pancake
Breakfast has been rescheduled due
to a small fire in the engine house
kitchen ..."

*

As the chatter and activity overwhelm the radio volume, the cafe we see is an old-time, wooden floor coffee shop with homestyle cooking, big glass windows along the sidewalk, lots of green plants in a window with hand painted lettering.

The Cafe is pretty much run by the very crotchety older Spanish waitress we met earlier, TERASITA SANCHEZ. She's taking an order from a retired out-of-town couple.

MR PATRON

This is so exciting, isn't it
Lydia? I'm just so excited. Can we
order and still be on time for the
show at the Theatre?

TERASITA

If you would finally tell me what
you h-want, Yes.

*

*

MRS PATRON

Do you serve Mexican food?

TERASITA

Is not on the menu. See? Hamburger,
Deli sandwich and de Hot Brown.

MR PATRON

Sorry, it's our first time here.
From Detroit. Taking the wife on
vacation

MRS. PATRON

This is a lovely town

MR PATRON

We listen to the WoodSongs show on
the radio back home and thought we
come see it in person

TERASITA

OK, then, two Hamburgers. You wanna
haf de fries?

PATRON IN NEXT TABLE

*(holding a huge hamburger, half
eaten)*

The hamburgers are resplendent!

CUT TO:

INT / FROM THE BACK OF THE CAFE

As the camera moves across the room we come behind the
shoulders of a man, head down over his coffee cup, listening.
The camera moves down his arm and we see the missing fingers
of BARRY on top of his white mug of coffee.

TERASITA

You want more of de coffee?

BARRY

Is Doc Stanley still in this town

TERASITA

You know the Doc? He die years ago.
But his daughter is Doc now. Four
doors down on de street. Dis away'
You lif in dese town now?

BARRY

I'll take more coffee.

CUT TO: *

INT/THAT EVENING - BACKSTAGE AT THE THEATRE

(to COLISTA'S JAM music in background)

We are at the WoodSongs taping, backstage. We see a montage of activity, sound crew, instruments getting tuned, gear being unpacked.

We see NIKKI wearing headsets and going over a script with a camera man.

NIKKI

Just stay close on the hands when they're playing. He wants it to show real clear. Like you're teaching. The show is a music lesson.

CAMERAMAN

OK

NIKKI

OK? You know what I'm saying

CAMERAMAN

Yeah

NIKKI

Do headphones make my head look fat?

BUCK walks into the theatre with Bob and walks up to Nikki and the Cameraman. *

NIKKI

(taking off her headphones)
BUCK, where you been? You're late. *

BUCK

Nikki, baby. You are so ...
Motherly. *

He kisses her on the cheek and she swats him away.

NIKKI

Your artists are here and your
interview is waiting.

As BUCK heads off into the Theatre, *

NIKKI

And comb that head before they take
pictures. And don't wear that ugly-
ass hat. *

Nikki puts the headphones back on,

NIKKI

(looks at the Cameraman)
You sure my head don't look fat?

CUT TO:

INT / THEATRE BUCK & WRITER *

We start close on the head of BUCK's banjo, autographed by
many stars of the Folk and Americana world. We PULL BACK and
see BUCK and a magazine writer inside the empty Theatre as
the WoodSongs crew assembles the PA and stage behind them. *

BUCK is sitting on a chair in the isle HOLDING HIS LONG NECK
BANJO, in front of the magazine writer. *

The magazine is Banjo World. The two are surrounded by extra
lights for a photographer who is clicking away as they speak.

The writer is played by Grammy winning banjo master **BELA
FLECK.**

WRITER

Thanks for giving us the time. I'm a big fan of the show. It airs in Nashville.

BUCK

(as he shakes hands)

Cool. I'm sorry I didn't catch your name

WRITER

Bela. How do you spell "SEEGER"

BUCK

Wow. How do you spell Bela? I'll trade.

WRITER

Touche. Anyway, Banjo Magazine is very interested in your banjo style and the kind of instrument you use.

BUCK

How flattering. Do you know much about the banjo or do you just write about it.

WRITER

Oh, I play a little.

CUT TO:

INT. KENTUCKY THEATRE - DARTH FADER'S ENTRANCE

From an angle close to the floor, we look up at a HUGE LARGE ROUND man walking the isle of the Theatre. He is A BIG man, almost 400 pounds. It is the show engineer Kevin who is called DARTH FADER. He sits on his chair behind the mixing console.

A sign hang behind him that says: *Darth Vader*" with the V crossed out and an F written overtop of it.

A crew member hands him a script. Another places a Darth Vader "Star Wars" doll with a banjo glued to it on the console. Speaking into his mic he booms into the theatre speakers:

DARTH

Somebody bring me a salad.

NIKKI

OK, sound check time ... Somebody
get the man a salad.

CUT TO: *

EXT/EVENING/ DUSK - DOC'S OFFICE *

We see the leaves of autumn blow on the sidewalk in the
evening twilight. Barry's hand grips the doorknob of Docs
office. *

CUT TO: *

INT/ DOC'S OFFICE *

As the doc sits behind her desk filling out some last minute
forms before ending her day and looks up. *

DOC *

Well, well ... A last minute
visitor. *

PASSENGER *

I came by ... *

DOC *

Set on the table. Take off your
jacket. *

Barry hesitantly walks over to the table and sits down. *

DOC *

I can't unbutton that shirt for
you, can I. *

As BARRY unbuttons his army shirt the Doc places his
stethoscope on his chest, *

DOC *

Been traveling long? *

PASSENGER *
A while *

DOC *
Plan to stay? *

PASSENGER *
Maybe. *

Doc takes her stethoscope out of her ears and gives him a
good long stare. *

DOC *
It's been, what? Twenty years? *
Thirty? Or longer *

PASSENGER *
It's been a while *

Doc, placing his hand on Barry's shoulder: *

DOC *
It's good to see you again, Barry. *

CUT TO:

EXT/EVENING/ DUSK - KENTUCKY THEATRE

As the show theme song, COLISTA'S JAM, plays in the
background ... We see the Kentucky Theatre marquee and camera
pans down as the crowd enters the theatre doors.

We see the historic interior lobby, kids and parents around
the pop corn stand.

Posters of old movies on the wall and a sign that reads
"Welcome to the WOODSONGS OLD-TIME RADIO HOUR" and a small
line of people along Main Street in front of the ticket
window getting tickets for tonight's show.

MAN

Who are The Mullet Sisters?

WOMAN

I heard them on the radio this afternoon. I'm not sure.

MR. PATRON

What a wonderful town. After hearing so much about it on the show it's just so exciting to be here. Taking the Mrs on vacation, don't you know.

*
*

MRS. PATRON

And what a delightful Cafe.

ANOTHER MAN

Those hamburgers are just resplendent!

*

CUT TO:

INT/INSIDE THE KENTUCKY THEATRE / EVENING

We see the audience filing into the Theatre. WoodSongs Crew in black Crew shirts help them find their seats.

We see the lobby with minstrels and fans milling around talking and laughing.

*

We go BACKSTAGE as Nikki is making last minute changes to the script. BUCK sits in a corner with the BLUES PLAYER talking about the show. The MULLET SISTERS are on the couch drumming their mallets in their knees.

*

The CLOCK on the wall shows five minutes to 7.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT - ROBYNN IN HER HOUSE

We are CLOSE on a clock that says 6:55. The CAMERA moves down from the wall to Robynn, holding the baby with one arm and holding a phone to her ear with the other.

ROBYNN

No mom, I'm fine. I told you, just a little tired ... Nothing out of the ordinary.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT - MRS. SMITH IN HER BED & BREAKFAST

MRS. SMITH

well, i'm just finishing up dinner with your father. you were on my mind, i just wanted you to know

*

ROBYNN (VO)

how come you are always so sweet no matter what is happening. why can't i be more like my mother?

MRS. SMITH

My goodness, somebody frame that. Really, I wish you could come for Sunday dinner. Maybe next week.

ROBYNN

It's a time thing. BUCK is so busy and I feel like I'm running in circles half the time trying to keep up.

*

MRS. SMITH

Honey, I'm right here if you need to talk, I just don't want to pry. You know you're still my baby.

ROBYNN (VO)

You're great mom. Gotta run. Radio time.

MRS. SMITH

well ... talk to you in the morning, then.

(hangs up phone, then to HUSBAND)

Henry, the radio.

CUT TO:

INT/INSIDE THE KENTUCKY THEATRE / EVENING

We see the audience in their seats, theatre is packed, the opening credits of WoodSongs hits the speakers, we see the couple from the restaurant in their seats taking pictures and smiling.

BUCK and the FBO take the stage. *

Opening PERFORMANCE of WaterFall, the song BUCK was working on earlier in the week. *

"Precious droplets of Time
In Her eyes.
stolen moments of rain in the sky
Like tears of angels high above
and covers me in her
WaterFall of love"

During the song we

CUT TO:

INT/NIGHT - ROBYNN IN HER HOUSE

Robynn sits on the edge of the couch by the lamp, baby is asleep in her arms, and listens to WoodSongs on the air while reading a magazine. She listens to the song, knowing it is yet another song about her.

As the song plays, she puts down her magazine and listens closer. She looks at the phone and reaches for it as if to call someone. Then puts it back down, leans back and, surrendering, closes her eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. / ON STAGE AT THE KENTUCKY THEATRE

We see a montage, almost a music video, of the song being played. We cut from each player to the audience, camera people, DARTH FADER at the mixing console, the TV/WEBCAST crew behind the video switchers.

CUT TO:

INT/NIGHT - ROBYNN IN HER HOUSE

Heard from Robynn's radio:

BUCK FROM STAGE
 And welcome to the crossroads of
 America's folk and grassroots music

As the audience applauds, she turns off radio.

ROBYNN
 Hey little baby ... You think you
 can turn that song into a paycheck
 with health insurance? No? Ohhh,
 you're just like your daddy ...

The phone rings and Robynn picks it up

ROBYNN
 Hello? Well, Sam Bush how are you
 ... Of course this is Robynn. It's
 been a while.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAM BUSH, BACKSTAGE ON CELL PHONE

Sam Bush is at an outdoor festival ready to go onstage with his band, mandolin in hand and on the cell phone with Robynn

SAM
 How's that little baby? ... Good
 ...

(MORE)

SAM (cont'd)
 Tell BUCK I got his email and that
 I'd love to come up and help on his
 new record.

*

ROBYNN
 Oh... The new album. Right. I guess
 that's coming up soon?

SAM
 Well, he said next month. Have him
 email me the demos and I'll be
 there. Same deal as last time.

*

JOHN COWAN
 Are you going to yak all night or
 play

SAM
 Hey, I gotta get on stage.

CUT TO:

INT/NIGHT - ROBYNN IN HER HOUSE

ROBYNN
 Same deal. Got it Sam. I'll tell
 BUCK you called

*

She hangs up the phone, sighs and blows the hair from the
 side of her face. She looks at her sleeping baby in her arms

Same deal, sweetie ... Same deal.
 Nothing ever changes.

CUT TO:

*

EXT/OUTSIDE DOC'S OFFICE / EVENING

*

Doc is locking up her office as BARRY gets ready to walk
 away.

*

*

DOC
 Barry, this is a good town. Good
 people. Salt of the earth people.
 (MORE)

*

*

*

DOC (cont'd) *
 Most of them either don't know, *
 don't care or don't remember. Some *
 things are best just put away. *

BARRY *
 Can't put away what ain't finished. *

DOC *
 Maybe it's best left undone, then. *
 You can't change the un-changable. *

BARRY *
 Maybe so. Maybe not. *

With that, Barry walks down the sidewalk into the night. *

CUT TO:

INT/ON STAGE AT THE KENTUCKY THEATRE / EVENING

We see BUCK talking to the blues player. Cut back and forth *
 to the audience and engineers and camera people, TV and *
 webcast directors, BUCK explaining the show on-air, the *
 hammer dulcimer duo begin playing a fast number. Audience
 applauds.

CUT TO:

EXT/EVENING - FROM THE STREET OUTSIDE THE KENTUCKY THEATRE

(volume of the show dialogue reduces but still heard clearly)

We see BARRY in the shadows, we are CLOSE on his eyes *
 watching the blinking lights of the Theatre marquee and *
 leaning on a tree.

He drinks from a bottle wrapped in a brown paper bag. *

We watch as the cameras gets CLOSE on his lips, taking his
 sip of whiskey. He is quiet and sullen.

CUT TO:

INT/EVENING BUCK ON STAGE

*

We see several scenes of the show in action, audience shots, interview and music with the guests, and as Harsha plays his guitar:

BUCK TO AUDIENCE

*

It's our resident blues guitar man
and Retina Eye Surgeon, Hotlicks
Harsha Sen.

(APPLAUSE)

We know he really is an eye doctor
because every song he plays is in
the key of ...

AUDIENCE

"C!!!"

*

CUT TO:

EXT/EVENING - FROM THE STREET OUTSIDE THE KENTUCKY THEATRE

We see BARRY in the shadows listening outside the theatre to the muffled sounds of the show, now smoking on a cigarette which glows eerily in the dark.

*

*

CUT TO:

INT. EVENING / ON KENTUCKY THEATRE STAGE

The end of the broadcast the audience shouts WOODSONGS OLD TIME RADIO HOUR! And the audience cheers.

CUT TO:

EXT/EVENING - FROM THE STREET OUTSIDE THE KENTUCKY THEATRE

We see BARRY, in the dark. We hear the rustling of footsteps in the leaves, suddenly the glow of a flashlight hits the MAN in the face, we see a glimpse of his features.

*

As the MUFFLED SOUNDS OF THE SHOW continue:

POLICEMAN

Hey there, fella. Kinda nippy to be outside without a coat.

BARRY

(holds his hand up to block the light in his eyes)
I'm fine.

POLICEMAN

You're new in town.

BARRY

Just moved here.

POLICEMAN

Oh yeah? Where's your house?

BARRY

Don't have one yet. Staying up the street.

The Policeman looks thoughtfully, shines the light onto his bad hand and sees the missing fingers. The flashlight beam lingers on the injured hand.

BARRY

Enjoying the show?

The Policeman turns the light away from his injuries and back to the man's face.

POLICEMAN

Look Mister, I don't know who you are. Why don't you head on home.

The Policeman turns off his light and walks on.

The BARRY draws from the cigarette, holding it with his injured hand. He throws his bottle down, tosses his cigarette butt, turns away and walks into the darkness.

CUT TO:

INT/EVENING BUCK ON STAGE *

We see the audience stand on their feet in ovation, clapping to the theme music. BUCK waves to the audience, turns and shakes hands with the artists on the show. We see kids next to parents and the crowd prepares to leaves the theatre. *

As the cheers and music and clapping continue:

AUDIO: CHEERS DISSOLVE TO THE SOUND OF WHEELS:

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAR/SAME NIGHT BUCK AND BOB *

Bob drives BUCK back to his house. *

BOB
Good show tonight

BUCK
It was OK. We pulled it off. Those
Mullet Sisters are fun. *

BOB
Great haircuts

BUCK
(laughs)
Actually, I meant their playing.
Dude, you sound like Malcolm. *

BOB
Now there's the DJ from hell! *

BUCK
Oh, what I would give to have a
local radio station that actually
gets it. *

BOB
(laughs)
 In time, in time.

BUCK *
 Well, a man can grow old waiting. *
 Time marches on, Bob. We only got *
 so much young in the bank. It gets
 spent with or without you.

BOB *
 Ol' Malcolm does his best, in spite *
 so little actual ability.

*
 Song worked out. I hope Robynn
 likes it, it's a pretty tune

BUCK *
 I guess. I'll find out soon enough.

BOB
 Good song for the new record.

BUCK *
 Yeah ... let's live with it a
 while.

As the car pulls into the driveway of the farmhouse,

BOB
 Everything going ok?

BUCK *
 Folk-a-licious, my friend

BUCK get's out the car. Pulls his guitar out of the backseat *
 and leans into the car window,

BUCK *
 Thanks again for the ride. Talk at
 you tomorrow

CUT TO:

INT/NIGHT FARMHOUSE

BUCK walks into the house, Robynn is in the living room dozing on the couch with the baby asleep in her arms. *

BUCK
Hey sweetie ... The show was good.
Did you hear? *

No response from the sleeping Robynn.

BUCK puts his hat on the kitchen table and places his guitar away. He walks into the doorway of the living room. *

He picks up the baby and walks over to the crib, places the child down carefully, so not to awaken the little boy from sleep. Then he walks over to his sleeping wife on the couch.

BUCK
Come on ... *

They walk into the bedroom, BUCK pulls the covers down and lays her in the bed. He kisses her cheek as he pulls the covers up and turns off the light. *

He walks back into the living room, reaches behind the couch and pulls out his new mandolin. He quietly unzips the leather gig bag, taking out the instrument.

BUCK
Beautiful ... *

Sitting down on the couch, he is ready to start working out a tune when he notices a slip of paper by the phone with his name on it.

His picks up the paper, unfolds it and we read:

"SAM CALLED"

*

BUCK closes the paper, knowing Robynn found out about the album session before he could talk about it with her, lays his mandolin in his lap and let's out a sigh.

*

BUCK
Dude, you are so busted.

*

CUT TO:

EXT/NIGHT DOWNTOWN AT MIDNIGHT

Our CAMERA travels down the darkened Main Street up to the Midway bed & Breakfast. The CAMERA slowly moves up the outside wall to an open window, the curtain lightly blows in the crisp night breeze. There are no lights on inside the room.

CUT TO:

INT/NIGHT - BARRY INSIDE THE ROOM

*

From inside the darkened room, we are looking out of the window to the Kentucky Theatre marquee down the street.

We HEAR muffled sounds of speaking from inside this room.

The marquee lights turn off as the CAMERA backs slowly away from the window.

In the glow of the street lights we can see the room, sparsely furnished, clothes draped over a chair by the bed stand.

An empty bottle of whiskey lays on its side atop the lamp table next to the phone, off its hook. We follow the phone line to BARRY sitting in the dark room.

*

BARRY
No ... I'm not coming back ... No
... Don't try ...
(MORE)

*

BARRY (cont'd)
 it don't matter now ... I'm sorry,
 you know it used to be different,
 baby, but it's not that way now ...
 Forget it all, move on.

We HEAR the sudden sound of a dial tone. *

We see the silhouette of Barry on the bed, rocking back and forth, obviously filled with anxiety. We HEAR his low groans. *

The camera moves down to his bad hand ... Then over to his good one. In the shadows of the room and the gleaming light from the neon signs of Main Street we see the GUN IN HIS HAND.

FADE TO BLACK *

CUT TO: *

EXT/MORNING - BEAUTIFUL SUNRISE *

We see the morning sun half rising over the mountains in the horizon. It is a beautiful autumn morning in Kentucky. The CAMERA lingers on the deep orange colors of the sunrise and *

We heard a loud bang, like a gun shot. *

We linger a bit more on the sunrise and hear: *

MARLOW VO
 Dammit, I missed. *

CUT TO: *

INT/MORNING AUTO GARAGE - MARLOW AND BUCK *

The red VW van backfires again. From underneath, Marlow hollers out to BUCK. *

MARLOW
 Try turning it over once more. I'll
 catch it this time ... *

BUCK
 Marlow, I doubt you could catch a
 cold, no less this.

*
 *
 *

After more banging, Marlow appears from under the van, stands
 up and wipes his greasy hands on his coveralls.

*
 *

MARLOW
 Well, I got it all figured out

*
 *

BUCK
 Finally ... What is it?

*
 *

MARLOW
 It's irreparably broke.

*
 *

BUCK
 Thanks. What do I do now?

*
 *

MARLOW
 Obviously you need a good old
 fashioned hit record so you can
 make a lot of money, get ripped off
 by the record label, find out your
 manager absconded with whatever is
 left just to end up becoming a
 celebrity used-automobile car lot
 spokesman. You will then be able to
 get a discount on a good used
 vehicle.

*
 *
 *
 *
 *
 *
 *
 *
 *
 *
 *

BUCK
 Wow. Inept auto repair service plus
 financial advice.

*
 *
 *

MARLOW
 No extra charge.

*
 *

BUCK
 OK, Really. What do I do now?

*
 *

MARLOW
 I got some used parts out back.
 I'll have it done by this
 afternoon.

*
 *
 *
 *

CUT TO:

*

INT/MORNING DOCS OFFICE

Doc is rolling her fingers on the desk, deep in thought.

NURSE

You nervous or are you trying to wear out that wood?

DOC

Betsy, find me that old Abernathy family file.

NURSE

Good heavens. There's a name I haven't heard in years. Why them?

DOC

And get me the SEEGER family. Not BUCK and Robynn. His parents and grandparents.

NURSE

Do I dare ask?

DOC

I'm just aiming to change what shoulda been changed a long while ago.

Doc stares the nurse down, who shakes her head and goes off for the files.

CUT TO:

INT/MORNING MIDWAY CAFE

Harsha and Ben are at a cafe table, in front of five mugs of coffee. Bob arrives and sits in front of his.

BOB

Where's BUCK?

BEN

Late.

HARSHA
I think it's the van again

*
*

Terasita is at a nearby table dealing with other customers
and we hear:

*
*

TERASITA
We no haf de corn muffins. Only
hamburgers, deli sandwich and de
Hot Brown. Coffee and bagel in the
morning. You take de cream?

*
*
*
*
*

Nikki arrives at the cafe, strolls up to the table and
sleepily sits down in front of her mug.

*
*

NIKKI
Van down again?

*
*

BOB
Yep

*
*

CUT TO:

*

INT. ROBIN'S MOM / "MIDWAY BED & BREAKFAST" - MORNING

*

VARIOUS GUESTS are gathered for breakfast in the dining room
of the bed & breakfast. Mrs. Smith pours orange juice into a
glass

*
*
*

MRS. SMITH
There you go dear.

*
*

GUEST #1
Where's that pretty daughter of
yours this morning?

*
*
*

MRS. SMITH
Oh, she was feeling a bit tired so
I told her to stay home. She works
so hard.

*
*
*
*

GUEST #1 *
 Isn't she married to that musician? *

MRS. SMITH *
 Yes, she sure is *

GUEST #2 *
 The one with the radio show. What *
 fun we had last night. Did you go? *

GUEST #1 *
 The tickets were all gone. We had *
 dinner at that little cafe and *
 everyone was just a buzz about it. *

GUEST #3 *
 We had dinner there too. Those *
 hamburgers are just resplendent! *

MRS. SMITH *
 Well, BUCK and his friends have a *
 lot of fun with all that music *
 going on. Yes, yes, yes! *

Mrs. Smith hears steps from the staircase and looks up to see *
 BARRY coming down with his black book. He says nothing, walks *
 past the group at the breakfast table and goes out the door. *

GUEST #4 *
 Now, there's a strange one. *

GUEST #2 *
 Well, I'm not one to notice but I *
 swear he was up half the night *
 doing lord-knows-what in that room. *

GUEST #3 *
 What do you suppose they put in *
 those hamburgers, anyway? *

CUT TO: *

INT. WMID OFFICE - MORNING - SAME DAY *

Malcolm stands at the coffee machine and finishes off his cup *
 of coffee. MR. WELDON, the rotund, balding crotchety station *
 manager and program director, walks by. *

MR. WELDON

I need to start charging for that
coffee. You drink too much.

MALCOLM

That would be like charging for
air. You ... You ... REPUBLICAN.

CUT TO:

INT. WMID STUDIO - MORNING - SAME DAY

MR. WELDON waits in the studio and listens while the on-air
DJ finishes up. Malcolm walks in with a stack of CD's.

DJ

Here's a nice, crunchy autumn song
for all you tied-died granola
types. BUCK SEEGER and his song,
The Cabin, on WMID, The Voice of
Midway ...

DJ

(Takes off headphones)
Yes, boss?

MR. WELDON

I thought we, uh, lost that album

MALCOLM

Oh, I found it. In the alley out
back.

MR. WELDON

Listen, we have pretty tight
traffic on air. I don't want to
give away anymore WoodSongs
tickets. Takes up too much time

DJ

What? Why? The listeners love 'em.

MR. WELDON

Well, I was on the board this
morning and not one person called.

Mr. Weldon walks out of the studio. *

MALCOLM (MUTTERS) *
 'cause no one's listening when he's *
 on the air. "Boring!" *

CUT TO: *

EXT/RAILWAY STATION - SAME MORNING *

We see a train close up as it rumbles by. As the train *
 disappears from screen we see Robynn's little blue Toyota *
 across the tracks in front of the quaint, rustic Midway Train *
 Depot. She gets the baby out of the rear car seat and walks *
 inside. *

CUT TO: *

INT/MORNING - TRAIN DEPOT *

We see Robynn in front of the information board showing the *
 train schedules. She runs her finger down each destination. *
 BUCK fidgets and she puts him down. *

ROBYNN *
 Don't run off. You stay right next *
 to momma. *

CUT TO: *

INT/MORNING - TRAIN DEPOT - TICKET CLERK *

We see the white haired ticket clerk (played by bluegrass *
 great **DEL McCOURY**) in his striped shirt and railroad hat *
 behind the bars of the ticket window look up from his *
 schedule book and see's Robynn *

CLERK *
 Looking for a ticket to somewhere? *

ROBYNN
How far will this train go?

CLERK
Pretty far piece, it will.

CUT TO:

INT/MORNING - TRAIN DEPOT - BABY

We see Little BUCK playing on the ground at his mothers feet while she talks to the clerk. He spies a LITTLE MOUSE running across the floor. In the distance we here the approach of the next train.

CUT TO:

INT/MORNING - TRAIN DEPOT

The little mouse scampers toward the doors and out of the building. BUCK crawls on the floor after it as if it was a happy game. Robynn continues her talking to the clerk. The sound of the oncoming train gets louder.

ROBYNN (VO)
It would be wonderful to just get
on a train and go ... anywhere.

CLERK (VO)
Yep. 'Specially if your looking to
clear your heart. Trains are mighty
good for that.

CUT TO:

EXT/MORNING - TRAIN DEPOT - LOADING WALK

BUCK makes his way outside of the Depot onto the wooden loading platform in front of the tracks. The mouse scurries toward the tracks and ducks last minute into a crack between the wooden planks.

ROBYNN (VO)

The rhythm of the rails. I've been
around this train all my life and
I've never even been on it. There's
a lot I haven't done yet.

CLERK (VO)

Yer still young, plenty of time.
Plan to bring along yer baby?

Robynn looks down and doesn't see the child. The sound of the
oncoming train becomes more defined and rumbling. She drops
her purse and spins around.

ROBYNN

BUCKY!

The clerk looks out the door and sees the child crawling
toward the tracks. He points through his window:

CLERK

There!!!

CUT TO:

EXT/SAME MORNING - TRAIN DEPOT - BUCK and the Train

We are CLOSE on BUCK as he crawls on his hands and knees
looking for the mouse. He is at the very edge of the
platform.

The sound of the approaching TRAIN horn and his mother's
SCREAM meld into each other.

We see the TRAIN barrelling toward the camera.

We see BUCK bending over the edge, hears the Train and looks
up toward the camera.

The sound of the Train and the mother's scream reach full
level.

CUT TO: *

EXT/MORNING - TRAIN DEPOT - A Hand *

Suddenly, out of nowhere, a MAN'S hand grabs the back of
BUCK'S little shirt and pulls him up *

CUT TO: *

INT/MORNING - TRAIN DEPOT - Barry and Robynn *

We see Barry lifting the child up with one hand by the back
of the baby's shirt collar as the Train lumbers by. Robynn
races to the platform edge and grabs the child, falling to
her knees. *

We see the clerk running out to the platform fussing over the
situation *

CLERK *

Oh, thank God! *

CUT TO: *

INT/SAME MORNING - MIDWAY CAFE *

BUCK strolls into the Cafe and toward the table with his
waiting friends. *

NIKKI *

Thank God. *

BUCK *

Sorry. The van. *

BEN *

Hey, I heard them play a song on
the radio this morning. *

HARSHA *

Well, hell must have froze over. *

BUCK *

At last. Terasita, a fresh cup of
coffee ... And an IV tube please. *

TERASITA
You want de cream?

NIKKI
We still got some on the table,
honey. OK, people Let's please
talk about this album before the
morning's gone and I'm to old to
remember why I'm even here.

CUT TO:

INT/DAY - RADIO STATION - SAME MORNING

Mr. Weldon sits behind his cluttered wooden desk in the old
radio station building. On his walls are local awards and
certificates.

We see a picture of him with a past Governor, a local ribbon
cutting, some local advertising awards. We see a lot of SELF
in his office, of someone who wishes he was more important
than his life turned out to be.

He is on the phone.

MR. WELDON
Yes, Frank, I know it's popular. I
don't question that at all. But the
little bastard owns the whole thing
and I'm left only promoting it on
the air. That's just not good
business.

He pauses as he listens into the phone, then lights up a
cigar.

It's a matter of eminent domain, in
my opinion. It's time for a
reigning in of this colt before it
runs off too far. You follow?

CUT TO:

INT/DAY - RADIO STATION - HALLWAY

MALCOLM is walking down the hallway, holding his cup of coffee in one hand and his ever present stack of CDs in the other. He's about to walk into Mr. Weldman's office when he hears:

MR. WELDMAN

It's time for WoodSongs to become station property ... I know it's syndicated, Frank. That's the value of it. The on-air real estate can be huge on this deal.

Malcolm stays silent outside the door as he listens.

Look, I didn't work all my life in this business just to have some damn banjo playing folksinger come along and steal my thunder. I deserve this, dammit. Hell, this is MY station.

Malcolm turns to leave. As he heads down the hallway, under his breath:

MALCOLM

So much for the "public" in public radio

CUT TO:

INT/DAY - TRAIN DEPOT - Robynn and Barry

Robynn and Barry are inside the depot. Robynn is on a bench holding and rocking her son. The event of the morning is obviously past but Robynn is still shaken. BUCK is now sleeping as she cradles him. Barry stands in front of them.

ROBYNN

I want to thank you, I just don't know what to say. I feel like such a fool.

BARRY
 Don't go beating yourself up.
 Every parent has a scare now and
 then.

*
 *
 *
 *

Robynn notices his hand and missing fingers.

*

ROBYNN
 You're that man staying at my mom's
 place.

*
 *
 *

Barry sits next to her and BUCK on the bench.

*

BARRY
 I know who you are.

*
 *

ROBYNN
 You made quit a dramatic
 impression on the locals so far.

*
 *
 *

BARRY
 Haven't actually met too many yet.

*
 *

ROBYNN
 Well, I'm glad you met my little
 boy when you did. I can't imagine
 ...

*
 *
 *
 *

Robynn gets a bit emotional over how close she came to losing
 her child. Barry sits quietly on the bench.

*
 *

ROBYNN
 Do you have kids?

*
 *

BARRY
 I do. I did. I had me a boy. I lost
 him ... years ago.

*
 *
 *

ROBYNN
 I'm sorry.

*
 *

BARRY

Me too.

*
*

Robynn looks out the glass doors of the depot, past the railroad tracks and into the autumn colors engulfing the little town.

*
*
*

ROBYNN

This is a nice town. You can forget things here.

*
*
*

BARRY

I know

*
*

ROBYNN

Have you lived here before? Should I know you somehow?

*
*
*

BARRY

A long time ago. Maybe 30 years. It's not a very interesting story.

*
*
*

He gets up to leave

*

ROBYNN

How can we ever repay you?

*
*

BARRY

You take care now.

*
*

CUT TO:

*

EXT/DAY - MIDWAY SKY

*

The skies above Midway become darker, rain is coming. We see the color-laden maples and oaks sway in the breeze, leaves flying off branches. A colt runs agitated in a meadow.

*
*
*

CUT TO: *

EXT/DAY - MUSIC STORE *

Harsha pulls up to the music store as BUCK, Ben and Bob get out of his old Rambler. *

BEN *

You better get this top up, dude. *

The three head into the store as Harsha drives off. *

CUT TO: *

INT/DAY - MUSIC STORE *

Myra is behind the counter unpacking some supplies as the three come in. *

MYRA *

Well, it's about time. Bob, it's after 10 o'clock *

BOB *

Sorry honey. I'm here. *

MYRA *

BUCK, your banjo lesson has been waiting for 10 minutes already. You can't do people like that. *

BUCK *

You're right, I'm sorry. *

MYRA *

If you want me to schedule students for you, you better be on time. *

BUCK grabs a banjo off the wall and heads to the backroom where his student waits. *

BUCK *

Sorry, I left mine home. *

He opens the door and we get a glimpse of his student,
mandolin master **CHRIS THILE** of **NICKEL CREEK**, waiting inside.

The phone rings.

BOB
Hey Doc, good to hear from you.
Yeah, he is but he just started a
music lesson in the back ... OK,
I'll be sure to tell him ... take
care.

CUT TO:

INT/SAME DAY - DOC'S OFFICE

We hear thunder rumble in the distance as Doc hangs up the
phone. The nurse is standing next to his desk as they both
gaze into the open folder on his desk.

NURSE
You better be sure about this.

CUT TO:

INT/DAY - WOODSONGS OFFICE

We see more of the office everything happens in. Student
interns work on a table stuffing envelopes full of WoodSongs
shows on CD.

Nicki is at her desk. A wooden sign above he chair reads
"Welcome To The Nut House" and large posters of Johnny Cash,
Bob Dylan, Elvis and Woody Guthrie cover the walls like
wallpaper.

Malcolm enters.

NICKI
Aren't you supposed to be on the
air soon.

MALCOLM *
 That I am, my fair lady. Came by to *
 engage in a bit of public service. *

NICKI *
 Such as? *

MALCOLM *
 Oh ... a short, over weight, upper *
 middle aged living-in-the-glory- *
 days birdie inadvertently passed on *
 some information worth sharing. *

NICKI *
 What's Weldon up to now *

MALCOLM *
 I believe he's preparing to *
 commence fishing without a license *
 in another man's pond *

Nicki rolls back her chair *

NICKI *
 Oh, really. With what possible *
 bait? *

Malcolm points his finger at his forehead *

MALCOLM *
 No bait ... A gun to the head is *
 more like it *

CUT TO: *

INT/SAME AFTERNOON - BUCK & ROBYNN'S FARMHOUSE *

Robynn is tucking in Little BUCK as he naps. He sleeps very *
 soundly, totally unaware of what nearly happened to him *
 earlier. Robynn walks through her home, she looks at the *
 pictures on the wall, opens the refrigerator door then shuts *
 it. A guitar hangs on the wall and she runs her fingernail *
 over the strings. *

She goes into the living room and looks out the window into the darkening afternoon skies. A flash of lightning burns above the clouds in the distance. *

She sits on the couch, puts her head in her hands and cries. *

CUT TO: *

INT/AFTERNOON - BED & BREAKFAST/ BARRY'S ROOM *

Barry lies on his bed. Sitting up, he gazes out of the window to the storm clouds approaching over Midway. He walks to the window as raindrops begin to pellet the pane of glass. *

There's a knock at his door, then thunder. *

CUT TO: *

INT/ AFTERNOON - VW VAN - BUCK *

BUCK is in the van as the thundercloud explodes over him. Only one of the van's windshield wipers moves. *

RADIO VO/MALCOLM *

..and Midway and surrounding towns
are in for a good bath today folks. *
It's raining cats and dogs. Don't *
step in any Poodles. Ha Ha. I've *
got a Dar Williams rain song for *
you right after some delightful *
underwriting messages ... *

Buck's VW van pulls into the farm house. *

CUT TO: *

INT/SAME AFTERNOON - BUCK & ROBYNN'S FARMHOUSE *

BUCK enters the house from the back door. He takes his soaked jacket off and walks into the kitchen. *

He is about to call for Robynn but sees the baby sleeping in the bedroom, so stays quiet. He hears Robynn's voice upstairs and moves toward the stairwell.

ROBYNN VO

No, really. Thank you so much for this morning. It meant the world to me. You are a very special person ... I NEED to see you again, maybe tomorrow?

BUCK's wet face turns pale.

ROBYNN VO

OK, same place.

He hears to the phone hang up Robynn begins to come down the stairs and BUCK quickly slips out the back door, back into the rain and thunder.

CUT TO:

EXT/EVENING - MIDWAY

Water drips off a cabin roof into a waiting rain barrel below. A shop keeper sweeps wet leaves off the sidewalk in front of his store. The lights in the Midway Cafe turn off as Terasita ends a long day.

CUT TO:

EXT/EVENING - BLACK ROSE BEER HOUSE

BUCK sits at the bar of a mostly empty lounge. The club is softly lit, rustic in appearance ... leather and wood and small table lamps. The waitress is Gena, a friendly but caustic woman. Several chairs down from BUCK is a younger blonde, alone, with big hair.

GENA

Another hit?

BUCK *
Lay it on me *

GENA *
We don't usually see you in here *
anymore. It's been a while *

BUCK *
Don't usually have a reason to come *
by *

WOMAN *
Excuse me, are you that musician? *

BUCK *
I've been accused of worse. How are *
you *

She moves to the chair next to BUCK *

WOMAN *
I came to the show a couple of *
months ago. You sure sing pretty. *

GENA *
So, BUCK. How's the wife and kid. *

BUCK smiles. *

BUCK *
Good one. *

WOMAN *
I used to sing a lot when I was in *
high school *

GENA *
Excuse me, miss. Barbie called and *
she's like her hairdo back *

BUCK laughs and the woman, insulted, moves on. The entrance *
bell rings as the door opens and Nicki walks in. *

Nicki bellies up to the bar next to BUCK *

NICKI *
So, what's on the menu *

GENA *
He's had five so far. *

NICKI *
Oh, my. That's bad. *

BUCK *
It's cola for God's sake *

NICKI *
Still. Bad for the teeth and all. *
Does strange things to a man's *
mind. All them bubbles and such. *

BUCK *
Don't you have a husband to bother? *

NICKI *
Don't you have a baby at home. What *
are you doing here? *

BUCK *
Nothing. Thinking. *

NICKI *
Well, we have a problem ... So *
don't take your thinking cap off *
just yet. *

CUT TO: *

INT/EVENING - BED & BREAKFAST/BARRY AND DOC *

Doc sits on a chair as Barry sits on the side of his bed. *
Both are deep in conversation. Doc hands Barry a folder. *

DOC *
Is this why you came back, after *
all this time? *

BARRY *
Part of it. *

DOC *
What's the other part? *

BARRY

I don't know. To re-find it all.

DOC

Son, you were one of the best. I seen a few and you were right up there.

BARRY

But the war, coming home like this. Losing my son the way it happened.

DOC

But she stood by you the whole time

BARRY

She deserves better.

DOC

If you carry on like this, you're right. She would deserve better. Anyone would.

BARRY

So be it.

DOC

No. I don't buy it. Any of it. How does a man overcome what you did just to throw it all away. It makes no sense. No sense at all.

BARRY

I think ... I just got tired.

DOC

Hold on. I brought you something.

Doc gets up and goes out into the hallway. She comes back in the room with a large item wrapped in a blanket.

DOC

Maybe this will help get your head back on straight.

Doc reaches over to the nightstand and picks up a small bottle of whiskey.

DOC
 Surely it will serve you better
 than this nonsense.

Doc puts the bottle in her jacket pocket and leaves the room.

Barry goes to pick up the phone, stops and puts it down. He looks over to the item laying on the bed.

He opens up the blanket and we see a beautiful BANJO. We watch him CLOSE as he runs his injured hand over the strings of the neck.

CUT TO:

EXT/NIGHT - OUTSIDE BED AND BREAKFAST

Doc exits the bed and breakfast. He stops on the sidewalk and looks both ways. Pulling out the small bottle of whiskey he takes to cork out of the top, take a whif, smiles and salutes the night sky and downs a gulp.

CUT TO:

EXT/MORNING - FARMHOUSE/BUCK & ROBYNN

BUCK sits at the kitchen table alone with a cup of coffee as the early morning sunrise pours through the window. Robynn wakens and slowly walks in.

ROBYNN
 'morning,

BUCK
 Hey

ROBYNN
 You stayed out late.

BUCK
 Not too late. Nicki found out we have some issues with the hometown radio station.

ROBYNN
*(as she pours herself a cup of
 coffee)*
 Weldon never got it. Never will.

She sits at the table.

BUCK
 Many plans today?

ROBYNN
 Some. We need to ... Can we talk
 sometime? Maybe later?

BUCK
 I know. Me too.

The phone rings as Robynn leaves the room. BUCK picks it up.

BUCK
 Yeah. Hey Doc. ... I'm always up
 early, no problem ... OK ... sure,
 I'll be sure to stop by later.

CUT TO:

EXT/MORNING - MIDWAY MAIN STREET

We see a postman walking unhurriedly from home to home,
 placing letters in the mailboxes. He waves at the paperboy
 who peddles past him on his bike. The milkman comes toward
 him from the opposite end of the sidewalk.

MILKMAN
 Good Morning, Jake

POSTMAN
 Always is, Ralph

CUT TO: *

EXT/EARLY MORNING - MIDWAY CAFE *

The morning sunshine gleams golden through the cafe window. *
 Terasita pours a cup of coffee. We follow the coffee to a *
 table. We see cream and sugar added in the coffee and then *
 stirred with a spoon. We follow the spoon up and see Nikki, *
 sitting at a table next to the window. *

TERASITA *

You want de bagel with the coffee? *

NIKKI *

No honey, I'm fine *

Customers walk in. *

TERASITA *

You wait for you husband dis *
 morning? *

NIKKI *

Nope. I'm waiting for a roach to *
 crawl out from under his rock *

We can see the WMID studios across the street from Nikki's *
 table. *

CUT TO: *

INT/MORNING - Bed and Breakfast *

The usual array of characters gather around Elaine Smiths *
 breakfast table. *

ROBYNN

OK. You're all set. Thanks for watching the baby. I'll only be a while.

MOM

Of course, Sweetie.

ROBYNN

Where's that new border this morning. Mr. Abernathy?

MOM

Oh, he's long gone to lord knows where. The Doc was visiting him for quite a while last night.

ROBYNN

Doc was?

MOM

I didn't know you even knew this man's name.

ROBYNN

Everyone ... Well, everyone knows he's here. Small town and all.

Robynn kisses Little BUCK on the forehead as he sits in his highchair eating a huge banana and rushes off.

Her mom watches her run off and frowns in a worried way.

CUT TO:

INT/MORNING - FARMHOUSE

BUCK sits alone in his living room, guitar in his lap. He is trying to write but he can't. He reaches behind the couch and pulls out the mandolin he's been hiding from Robynn. Taking it out of the case he cradles it almost like a baby. He strums and picks it, listening to its strong wooden tone.

He puts it back down shaking his head.

BUCK

You doofus ...

He picks up the phone next to the couch and dials

*

BUCK

*

Mom? Hey, it's me. Is Robynn
nearby? She did? When? Oh, the baby
is? OK. Thanks. Love you.

*

*

*

*

Putting the phone down he stares blankly ahead. Tossing the
mandolin on the couch beside him he rushes out of the house.

*

*

CUT TO:

*

EXT/MORNING - BARRY AT RAILWAY STATION

*

The morning sunshine glistens off the brass fixtures inside
the little railway station. Barry sits on a bench, coffee in
hand, as an older man rattles on about his world view.

*

*

*

OLDER MAN

*

They cain't do it. They cain't get
the Jews and Christians and the
Arabs to stop fighting. And do you
know why?

*

*

*

*

*

He doesn't wait for Barry to respond

*

Because its a religious war. And
polyticians cain't solve a
religious war. Governments cain't
legislate religious emotion. It's
like asking that ant to stop this
here locomotive. Only the religions
can stop that war.

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

BARRY

*

I've been there, Mister. Religions
can't stop it either.

*

*

OLDER MAN

*

Well, now. Here comes you a pretty
one. See if you can go stop this.

*

*

*

Barry looks up to see Robynn enter the station. *

CUT TO: *

EXT/EARLY MORNING - WVMY Radio *

Nikki is waiting in her car outside of the station. Mr. Weldon drives up and parks. Nikki confronts him at the entrance. *

WELDON *
Well, Miss Nikki. You're out and *
about early this pretty fall day. *

NIKKI *
I hear you pulled all WoodSongs *
tickets off the air. *

WELDON *
(as he rustles his keys) *
Well, that's just a station matter. *
Too many underwriting spots and not *
enough time. Nothing to worry *
about. *

NIKKI *
Are you trying to take WoodSongs *
away *

Weldon stops dead in his tracks *

WELDON *
Now, that is an abrupt statement *
for such a gentle morning *

NIKKI *
There ain't nothing gentle about *
the morning ... yet. Are you trying *
to shut BUCK out of his own show? *

WELDON *
Look Miss Nikki. You best shut off *
that valve before too much pours *
out of your spicate *

NIKKI

Weldon, I know you - and I know
your brain. Don't you know you're
gonna look like a fool to the town,
to the audience and to 454 radio
stations if you mess with this.

WELDON

I don't know where you get these
delusions but I assure you I am not
this foolish

NIKKI

Yes ... you are.

Nikki climbs into her car, slams the door shut and rolls down
the window.

NIKKI

I don't know what you have up your
sleeve but I'm watching you. I
won't let you steal away this show.
BUCK has worked too long and too
hard. We all have.

WELDON

(as he leans onto her car window)
Now why would I try to steal what
shall be given freely in its own
due time?

Weldon walks away into the radio station before a stunned
Nikki can respond.

CUT TO:

EXT/MORNING - COUNTRY ROAD

BUCK drives through town, across country roads and lanes,
looking for Robynn's car. The van backfires and comes to a
stop. BUCK gets out of the van and opens the rear hood as
smoke pours out of the engine into the crisp autumn air.

BUCK
Dammit, Marlow.

*
*

Then he kicks the back tire

*

CUT TO:

*

INT/MORNING - RAILWAY STATION

*

Robynn and Barry are talking on the same bench they sat at
yesterday

*
*

ROBYNN
I don't know how to explain it.
Almost losing the baby made me
appreciate everything that gave me
the baby. I've been so unhappy and
, well ... Selfish in many ways. I
didn't realize how much I had to
lose until yesterday.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*

Barry doesn't respond, he just listens closely

*

ROBYNN
It's like a big puzzle, life is.
You put it together piece by piece
and you think you have it until you
come to a part that just doesn't
fit in - anywhere. And you look and
you search and you turn everything
over and upside down. All of a
sudden out of nowhere, there's the
missing piece, right in front of
you all this time.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*

BARRY
Not everyone finds that piece

*
*

ROBYNN
That's why I wanted to see you
today.

*
*
*

(MORE)

ROBYNN (cont'd)

Even though I could never thank you
enough, the one thing I could do is
encourage you, beg you, to let
yourself go back to whatever it is
you're running from.

BARRY

That's ... well, that would be hard

ROBYNN

Look, I was here at the station
yesterday dreaming of getting a
ticket and riding a train as far
away as I could. Why?? From what? A
beautiful town? My baby's family
and home? A man who loves me more
than anything in the world? What
was I thinking?

BARRY

Maybe you just weren't.

ROBYNN

True, maybe it is that simple

BARRY

I ... A long time ago. I know your
husband. BUCK

ROBYNN

When? How do you

BARRY

It's a long story. Not very
interesting, But he's a good man.
You should stick with him.

Robynn gets up to leave

ROBYNN

You don't talk much

BARRY

Well, you sure do

ROBYNN

I guess I do. Just know that you
can have friends here. You're a
good man and I will do anything I
can to return the gift you gave me.

(MORE)

ROBYNN (cont'd)

I just can't walk away all wrapped
up in my life without telling you
that you deserve yours too,
whatever it is.

*
*
*
*

Robynn leaves behind Barry sitting on the bench. He pulls the
black book out of his coat pocket and turns some of the
pages. Shutting it, he looks up and has tears in his eyes.

*
*
*

CUT TO:

*

INT/MORNING - MAYORS WAITING ROOM

*

Nikki waits in the outer office of the Mayor of Midway (**STEVE
EARLE.**) A street sign that says "*Copperhead Road*" a guitar
and mandolin hang on the walls above the waiting couch.

*
*
*

SECRETARY

*

The Mayor will see you now.

*

CUT TO:

*

INT/MORNING - MAYORS OFFICE

*

The mayor, played by songwriter STEVE EARLE, welcomes Nikki.
He wears jeans and a denim shirt, very casual.

*
*

MAYOR

*

Nikki, good to see you

*

NIKKI

*

Mr. Mayor

*

MAYOR

*

Call me Steve, all my creditors do.

*

NIKKI

*

I need a favor

*

MAYOR
Talk to me

NIKKI
It's about WoodSongs

MAYOR
(slaps the desktop)
Best damn thing that ever happened
to this town. People are pouring in
from all over the country, the
theatre is full every week, the
businesses downtown are happy, and
my son has decided to learn the
banjo

NIKKI
Amazing. Well, we need to create a
special WoodSongs Day and give BUCK
an award. Maybe a Star on the
Sidewalk in front of the Theatre.

MAYOR
An award for what?

NIKKI
Well, how about everything you just
listed for starters ...

CUT TO:

INT/MORNING - BED & BREAKFAST

BUCK is inside the bed and breakfast, waiting to talk to his
mother-in-law and pick up his son. He looks at the pictures
of his family hanging on the wall, a framed poster
advertising "WoodSongs" on Saturday nights.

MRS. SMITH
I'm sorry dear, Running late! We
needed to get a change and freshen
up before daddy came.

She hands Little BUCK off to his dad who gives him a big,
almost intense hug.

BUCK
Do you know when Robynn is coming
back?

MRS. SMITH
Not really, she just rushed out.

BUCK
Has she ... Does she have any new
friends ... And stuff.

MRS. SMITH
No one that she's mentioned. Why?

CUT TO:

INT/MORNING - WOODSONGS OFFICE

Little BUCK is teething on a mini-wooden guitar, sitting up
in front of his dad's desk. NIKKI is running a volunteer crew
meeting. The band is present. BUCK listens to the meeting
while holding a small family picture of his wife and child
from his desk.

NIKKI
Now, tomorrow's show is important.
We are adding four new affiliate
stations plus we have a potential
sponsor coming to visit.

KC
Who's that.

NIKKI
A coffee company in Virginia.

BOB
Folk music, coffeehouses ...
WoodSongs and coffee. It works.

BRYAN
Will we get free coffee?

DARTH
Next we'll need a donut sponsor.

Laughter

KC
I hear through the grapevine that
Weldon dropped the WoodSongs
tickets.

BEN
First they can our records, then
the tickets. What gives out there?

HARSHA
Is the show safe?

NIKKI
Everything is fine. Remember this
is not a local show. It's on
hundreds of stations with a huge
audience. Our hometown station
either is on board or not. It won't
change our world.

BRYAN
Most of the theatre crowd is coming
in from out of town now anyway.

BOB
Yeah, but it just smacks of
something out of sync. It hurts.

BUCK
Patience, folks. Let's be patient
and do the best we can. Patience
can seem very painful and expensive
at times, but always worth it. Keep
good artists and good music as the
most important thing ... Not the
local radio station.

NIKKI
Just remember, Weldon's the
hometown affiliate, not the owner.
It's NOT their show. Anything else?

DARTH
Yeah, more good news. Two speakers
have blown cones.

NIKKI
Goody. How much.

DARTH
About Fifteen hundred bucks

BUCK
 Wow ... That's how much a Rainbow
 Vacuum cleaner would cost.

DARTH
 OK. But the audience can't hear
 through a vacuum cleaner

BUCK
 I know. Never mind. Let's check
 eBay, I bet it's cheaper.

CUT TO:

INT/AFTERNOON/SAME DAY - ROBYNN IN FARMHOUSE

Robynn is on the couch, phone on her ear and pad and pen in
 hand while BUCK crawls across the cushions.

ROBYNN
 Yes Operator, I'm looking for a
 number, I'm not sure of the first
 name. Last name is Abernathy ...
 With an A. Abernathy. Really? That
 many? OK, give me the first two
 then ...

CUT TO:

INT/AFTERNOON/SAME DAY - DOC'S OFFICE

buck walks into the doc's office. Betsy gets up from her
 office desk.

BETSY
 BUCK, Doc's been waiting on you for
 two days.

BUCK
 Sorry, is Rome burning down and I
 don't know about it?

BETSY
 I'll get Doc

Doc comes out of her examination room *

DOC *

Son, I don't have as much time as I
like. I never ask a man for more
than he can give and I can't
explain right now. I'm sending
somebody to the theatre tomorrow.
Put him on the show if you can,
anywhere. *

BUCK *

Well, the show is already booked *

DOC *

Trust me and do this. *

BUCK *

... alright. Do I get a hint? *

DOC *

I got a patient waiting. *

CUT TO: *

INT/EVENING - BUCK & ROBYNN'S FARMHOUSE *

Little BUCK is playing in his crib as Robynn finishes up the
supper dishes. BUCK is working on the fireplace, getting a
warm cozy glow. Robynn enters the living room. *

ROBYNN *

Is now a good time *

BUCK *

Sure. Of course. *

They sit on the couch *

ROBYNN *

I know we've been kind of distant
with each other lately. *

BUCK

Babe, I'm sorry. It's me, I know.
I'm all caught up with work and
making things right. I just feel
everything coming together, getting
closer and closer but I haven't
focused on you and the baby like I
should. I need to spend more time
at home ...

ROBYNN

Will you ... Please, hush for a
minute. No. It's not you. It's me.

She takes a deep breath

ROBYNN

I have something to say and I need
you to listen

CUT TO:

INT/SAME EVENING - BED AND BREAKFAST/BARRY

Barry is alone in his room. Sitting on the bed, he reaches
for the bottle of whiskey, holds it for a second and then
lays it back down.

He picks it back up, corks it and then tosses it in the
trash. He lays back on the bed.

He gets up and walks to the banjo Doc gave him standing in a
corner of the room. We watch him gently touch the fretboard
and the gleaming tuning gears and strings.

He reaches over for the black folder he's been keeping. In
the back of the folder is a pocket. He unzips it and pulls
out a thumbpick and fingerpicks. We watch him put them on.

He inhales and then lets out a long sigh ... and

CUT TO:

INT/NOON NEXT DAY - MIDWAY CAFE

We are close to a customer's face, who lets out a delicious *
sigh. The whole table lets out a sigh. *

The worlds most scrumptious hamburger is on a plate in front *
of him. It is on a large, homebaked lightly toasted bun, a *
thick piece of fire-grilled burger, the largest slices of the *
ripest and reddest tomatoes, the greenest lettuce and soft *
melted cheese cascading over the side. *

CUSTOMER *

These hamburgers are splendiferous! *

ANOTHER CUSTOMER *

I think they're resplendent! *

THIRD CUSTOMER *

(holding up a cup for a coffee *
refill) *

Do you make steaks this good? *

TERASITA *

Is not on the menu. Only *
hamburgers, deli sandwich and de *
Hot Brown. Coffee and bagel in the *
morning. You take de cream? *

A husband rushes into the cafe *

HUSBAND *

Honey, I got them. The last two *
tickets, a fellow sold them to me *
on the sidewalk. *

WIFE *

I can't believe tickets for a *
national broadcast are only \$5 *

CUT TO: *

INT/AFTERNOON - KENTUCKY THEATRE *

The crew is hustling with last minute setups before sound *
check. Nikki is spending time with folks from the COFFEE *
COMPANY, showing them around and courting their sponsorship. *

BUCK is going over the script with Darth and the TV Director. *

DARTH *

You want me to fly him in with no
sound check *

BUCK *

I think that's what I'm saying.
Look, Doc never asks for anything
but she virtually begged for this. *

DARTH *

She realizes this is a national
production, right? I mean, this
isn't some local cable show. *

BUCK *

I know. Just set up the mic and be
ready. Guess your way through it. *

DARTH *

And you're OK with this? *

BUCK *

Yeah ... *

He sees Robynn and BUCK come in from the back of the theatre *

(Sarcastically) ... I'm wonderful
with it. *

CUT TO: *

INT/INSIDE THE KENTUCKY THEATRE / EVENING *

We see the audience filing into the Theatre. WoodSongs Crew
in black shirts help them find their seats. *

We see the Coffee Sponsors with Nikki handing out free cups
of coffee in the lobby with fans and lobby musicians milling
around talking and laughing. *

CUT TO: *

INT/BACKSTAGE KENTUCKY THEATRE / SAME EVENING

The crew is making last minute changes. The show guests are tuning and nervously chatting. The backstage TV monitor shows the audience filling the theatre.

We see the TV/Webcast director at his post with his panel of screens, speaking directions into his headset.

MULLET SISTER

Does this theatre fill up like this every week?

CREW MEMBER

Every single week.

CUT TO:

INT/INSIDE THE KENTUCKY THEATRE / EVENING

As the audience fills up the Theatre, we see Robynn and BUCK taking their seats toward the back of the hall.

CREW MEMBER

Aren't you going to sit up front?

ROBYNN

This is fine, thanks

CREW MEMBER

Good to see you again

Robynn looks around the hall. We see MYRA, MRS. SMITH and HAROLD, TERASITA files in with her grown son. NIKKI welcomes her husband, kisses him on the cheek as he takes his seat.

CUT TO:

INT/BACKSTAGE KENTUCKY THEATRE / SAME EVENING

BUCK and Darth get ready, they shake hands

DARTH
Don't suck.

*
*

BUCK
Don't suck.

*
*

The commotion of backstage suddenly quiets down. Attention turns to the backstage door as a dark, imposing figure fills the passageway. BUCK turns to see BARRY, holding the banjo Doc gave him.

*
*
*
*

BUCK
I heard you might come

*
*

BARRY
I heard you might let me

*
*

BUCK (eying his hand)

*

BUCK
How do you ... ?

*
*

BUCK
(*pointing to a tuning room*)
Go get your 440 on and let's go
then. D minor. You know the song.

*
*
*
*

BUCK ... PAUSES
Have we met?

*
*

The sound of applause fills the screen as we, Barry doesn't respond.

*
*

CUT TO:

*

INT/INSIDE THE KENTUCKY THEATRE / EVENING

*

The audience roars as BUCK and the Folkboy Orchestra take the stage. Barry walks up to his mic as the opening WOODSONGS intro rolls into the audience speakers.

*
*
*

Robynn, from her seat turns and sees DOC enter the theatre doors followed by an unknown woman, dark hair in her thirties. Robynn and the woman make eye contact. Doc tips his hat toward Robynn. *

The band powers into a hard driving bluegrass/mountain song, SHADY GROVE. Barry takes the instrumental leads with huge banjo riffs, played in REAL TIME to the camera, CLOSE on his injured hand. His skills and talent will be hypnotic if filmed right because Barry is in fact a brilliant banjo player. *

After the song the audience rattles the theatre with its applause and cheering as we *

CUT TO: *

INT/SAME NIGHT - INSIDE THE WVMY OFFICE *

The applause dissolves into the steady typing of Weldman's keyboard. He is behind a computer in a dark office, just the barest features of his face lit, creepy looking and mysterious. *

A cigar burns on his desk making the atmosphere even more sinister. *

He stares into the computer for a second and we watch him press the ENTER key of his keyboard *

WELDMAN *

Boom. *

CUT TO: *

INT/THE KENTUCKY THEATRE STAGE *

BUCK is ending the show. As he speaks we see Barry, His wife, Robynn, Doc and others from Midway close up. *

BUCK
(to the audience)
Remember that music should be part
of your life. It's OK if it's not
your livelihood. *

(MORE) *

BUCK (cont'd)

You are like Vikings on a huge
ocean of grassroots music. We are
on a journey together, exploring,
searching, uncovering the treasures
that each facet of this brilliant
diamond has to offer.

*
*
*
*
*
*

That's what we do here every week.
That's what the WoodSongs stage is
for. To encourage us to realize
that the most important spotlight
does not shine in some arena, but
in your own home and on your own
living room couch.

*
*
*
*
*
*

I'm BUCK SEEGER ... I'm a
folksinger, and I'm a treehugger
and we see you next week on

*
*
*

and the audience joins in

*

The WOODSONGS OLD-TIME RADIO HOUR

*

As the audience begins their reactions we

*

DISSOLVE TO:

*

INT/SAME NIGHT - INSIDE THE WMID OFFICE

*

The applause dissolves into the sound of Weldon's printer. As
the paper document comes out of the roller Weldon picks it up
and reads it in the starkly lit room.

*
*
*

As the Camera gets close, Weldon begins a quiet, under-his-
breath laugh as he draws on his cigar.

*
*

The CAMERA moves from his laughter out of the office window
to the KENTUCKY THEATRE marquee.

*
*

The frame FREEZES as 'TO BE CONTINUED" appears onscreen.

*

END OF EPISODE ONE *

*

FUTURE EPISODES:

Ricky Skaggs as the Sunday preacher
More of Steve Earle as the town Mayor
Michelle Shocked as a visiting artist
Don McLean as a local baker
Doc's practice is taken over by his son, Doc II
More of JC Crowe as the barber

*
*
*
*
*
*
*