

"TENDER MERCIES"

by

HORTON FOOTE

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FADE IN:

1 INT. - MOTEL ROOM - 1977 - NIGHT 1

Two men are drinking. One, MAC SLEDGE, is very drunk and is shouting incoherently at the other.

2 EXT. - MOTEL - NIGHT 2

The owner of the motel, ROSA LEE, comes out of her house having heard the shouts of the man. Her son, 10, is with her. She and the boy stand listening, wondering what to do.

3 INT. - MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT 3

MAC SLEDGE makes a lunge at the other man, misses and falls sprawling on the floor. His companion leaves him there, and MAC is too drunk to get up. His friend waits a moment and then reaches for MAC's coat lying beside him and takes money from his pockets.

4 EXT. - MOTEL - NIGHT 4

ROSA LEE and SONNY stand listening. It is quiet now in the men's cabin, and she and her son go back to their house.

5 INT. - MOTEL CABIN - DAY 5

It is dark in the room; the shades are all drawn, and a number of empty whiskey bottles are scattered around. MAC SLEDGE, still drunk, lies across the bed. There is a knock on the door, and a WOMAN'S voice calls. "Mister...Mister. Are you all right in there?"

OPENING TITLES - FADE IN

MAC turns over and mumbles something.

6 EXT. - MOTEL - DAY 6

A car is at the gas pump, and ROSA LEE is pumping gas. SONNY stands by watching her.

7 INT. - MOTEL ROOM - DAY 7

MAC is sitting on the edge of the bed. He goes to a basin and washes his face. He goes to the windows and opens the blinds.

WOMAN (O.C.)

It's gotten so high ain't it.

7 CONTD

CONTD 7

ROSA LEE (O.C.)

Yes.

WOMAN (O.C.)

We should have kept it to ourselves instead of shipping it to the yankees to squander.

8 EXT. - MOTEL - DAY

8

ROSA LEE is being paid by the motorist. She drives off. She and SONNY go into their house. MAC comes out of his cabin. He stands for a moment looking around and then crosses to ROSA LEE's house and knocks on the door. She and SONNY come outside.

ROSA LEE

Your friend said to tell you he had to move on.

MAC

How long have I been here?

ROSA LEE

Two days.

MAC

How far is it to the nearest town?

ROSA LEE

Four miles.

MAC

Did the fellow I was with pay for the room before he left?

ROSA LEE

No.

MAC

I guess I better pay you then.

He goes back inside his cabin.

9 INT. - MAC'S CABIN - DAY

9

He enters. He goes to a jacket lying on the floor. He searches the pockets of the jacket looking for money, but finds nothing. There is a half empty bottle of whiskey on the dresser, and he goes to it and takes a swig and then goes back outside. ROSA LEE is washing the windows of her house. SONNY is playing nearby in the yard. MAC goes over to her.

MAC

Lady?

ROSA LEE

Yes?

MAC

I'm broke. I'll be glad to work out what I owe you.

ROSA LEE

Are you still drinking?

MAC

Yes, ma'm.

ROSA LEE

Well, cut it out while you're working here. Are you hungry?

MAC

I could eat something.

She goes into the house.

10 EXT. - DAY - MOTEL GROUNDS

10

A SERIES OF SHOTS as we poke around the motel and its grounds. We should be aware that the grounds and the cabins are in need of work.

- (a) MAC working around the motel grounds cutting weeds with a scythe and a hoe.
- (b) MAC picking up trash, bottles, cans, etc.
- (c) ROSA LEE changing linens in motel room.
- (d) ROSA LEE cleaning a motel room.
- (e) ROSA LEE goes to window of room she is working on. She observes MAC working dilligently in yard.

11 INT. - ROSA LEE'S HOUSE - LATER THAT AFTERNOON

11

She is there folding clothes. MAC comes up to the screen door and knocks. She sees him and goes to the door.

ROSA LEE

Yes?

MAC

If you still need help the next couple of days I'll be glad to work on.

11 CONTD

CONTD 11

ROSA LEE

All right. I can give you your room and meals and two dollars an hour.

MAC

Thank you.

12 INT. - TRAILER - NIGHT

12

The trailer is in back of ROSA LEE's house and is where the hired help always stay. MAC is here listening to country western music on the radio.

13 EXT. - MOTEL - DAY

13

MAC is at the gas pump servicing a car.

14 INT. - HOUSE - NIGHT

14

ROSA LEE, MAC and SONNY eating supper.

SONNY

Mister?

MAC looks up.

SONNY

What's your name?

MAC

Mac.

They continue to eat in silence. When he has finished his supper, MAC gets up.

MAC

Would you mind paying me tonight for the days I've worked? I need to go into town and get some things.

ROSA LEE goes over to her purse and gets his money and gives it to him. He takes it and puts it in his pocket without counting it.

MAC

Thank you.

He goes out. ROSA LEE clears the table and then goes to the screen door and looks out. She can see MAC walking down the road.

14 CONTD

ROSA LEE

That's the last we'll see of
him. His kind just work long
enough to buy the whiskey to
get on another good drunk.

15 EXT. - HOUSE - EARLY MORNING 15

ROSA LEE is there. MAC comes into the yard and into his
cabin without speaking.

15A INT. - ROSA LEE'S HOUSE - MORNING 15A

SONNY is there. She enters.

ROSA LEE

He's back. Go ask him if he
wants breakfast.

SONNY

I thought you said he wasn't
coming back.

ROSA LEE

I was wrong.

SONNY goes outside.

15B EXT. - YARD - MORNING 15B

MAC is there at work as SONNY comes out.

SONNY

Mama says do you want breakfast?

MAC

I hate in town. Thank you.

16 EXT. - CABIN - NIGHT 16

ROSA LEE and SONNY are sitting in front of their house.
The lights are on in MAC's cabin.

17 INT. - MAC'S CABIN - NIGHT 17

He is there with a guitar and begins to pick.

18 EXT. - YARD - NIGHT 18

ROSA LEE and SONNY listen to his picking on the guitar.

19 EXT. - YARD - DAY 19

MAC comes out of his cabin and crosses the yard to ROSA LEE's house. She is cooking breakfast. He knocks at the door.

ROSA LEE
(calling out)
Come on in, Mac.

20 INT. - ROSA LEE'S HOUSE - DAY 20

She has an apron over her dress.

ROSA LEE
Breakfast will be ready in a minute. Sonny and I are going to church this morning. If you'd like to come with us, we'd be glad to have you.

MAC
Thank you. I think I will go with you.

ROSA LEE
I'll want to introduce you to our preacher, but I don't know your last name.

MAC
Sledge.

ROSA LEE
I've heard of you.

21 INT. - TRUCK - SUNDAY - DAY 21

ROSA LEE, SONNY and MAC are in the truck dressed for church. ROSA LEE is driving.

22 EXT. - CHURCH - DAY 22

ROSA LEE parks the truck. They get out.

23 INT. - CHURCH - DAY 23

ROSA LEE is singing in the church choir. MAC sits beside SONNY in the congregation, they are singing too. MAC is familiar with the hymns, he sings without looking at the hymnal.

24 EXT. - CHURCH - DAY 24

The preacher is in front of the church shaking hands with the congregation as they go past him.

24 CONTD

CONTD 24

ROSA LEE, MAC and SONNY come out of the church and go to the preacher.

ROSA LEE

Reverend Hotchkiss, this is Mr. Sledge. He's working for me at the motel.

HOTCHKISS

How do you do, Mr. Sledge.
(They shake hands)
Sonny tells me he wants to be baptized. I know that makes you proud, Rosa Lee.

ROSA LEE

Yes, it does.

HOTCHKISS

You were baptized in this church weren't you?

ROSA LEE

Yes, sir.

HOTCHKISS

And where were you baptized, Mr. Sledge?

MAC

I haven't been baptized.

HOTCHKISS

(Laughs)
Well, we'll have to work on you then.

MAC

Yes, sir. I guess so.

25 EXT. - DRIVE-IN - NIGHT

25

Cars are parked watching a horror movie.

MAC, ROSA LEE and SONNY are in the truck watching the movie. SONNY falls asleep and puts his head in his mother's lap.

ROSA LEE

(Pointing to the boy)
He's played out.
(She shifts him around a bit to make him more comfortable)

25 CONTD

CONTD 25

MAC

I have a daughter.

ROSA LEE

Do you?

MAC

She's four or five years
older than your boy.

ROSA LEE

Where is she?

MAC

With her mama. Me and her mama
are divorced. We didn't get
along too well, and I reckon
my drinking didn't help any.

26 EXT. - MOTEL GROUNDS - DAY 26

SONNY is looking around the grounds trying to find
MAC. He goes to the cabin. He knocks on the door and
calls. He gets no answer, he opens the door.

27 INT. - MAC'S ROOM - DAY 27

MAC is not there. There is not much in the room
except a guitar. SONNY enters and goes over to the
guitar. He looks at it for a moment and then goes out.

28 EXT. - YARD - DAY 28

ROSA LEE is there. SONNY comes out of MAC's cabin.

ROSA LEE

He's gone again. I saw him
leave only this morning.

SONNY

He's coming back, though.

29 EXT. - ROAD - DAY 29

SONNY and ROSA LEE riding in the truck going toward
town.

30 INT. - STORE IN TOWN - DAY 30

SONNY and ROSA LEE buying groceries.

31 EXT. - STREET IN TOWN - DAY 31

SONNY and ROSA LEE come out with groceries. They start for the truck. Walking down the street, very drunk, is MAC. He doesn't see them, and they don't let him know they've seen him. They get in their truck and drive off.

32 EXT. - ROAD - EARLY NEXT DAY 32

MAC walks down the road. He is hungover and seems very tired.

33 EXT. - MOTEL YARD - DAY 33

MAC walks into the yard. He goes up to ROSA LEE's house and knocks. She comes to the door.

MAC

I'm back. Anything particular you want me to do today?

ROSA LEE

The screen door in the cabin over there is broken. I'd like it fixed, please.

MAC

All right.

He starts toward the cabin she has pointed to, but changes his mind and goes into his own cabin.

ROSA LEE watches him. He leaves the door open and through the screen door she sees him go to his bed and lie down.

34 INT. - MAC'S CABIN - NIGHT 34

MAC lies across the bed with his clothes on. SONNY comes to the door.

SONNY

Mama says supper is about ready.

MAC

Thank you, but I don't believe I'll have any supper tonight.

SONNY

Are you sick?

MAC

I don't feel too good.

34 CONTD

CONTD 34

SONNY goes. MAC closes his eyes. There is a knock on the door.

MAC

Come in.

ROSA LEE enters, standing just inside the door.

ROSA LEE

Sonny says you're sick. Do you need a doctor?

MAC

I'll wait until tomorrow. If I don't feel better, then I'll go see one.

ROSA LEE

Call me if you need anything.

MAC

Thank you.

She leaves. MAC picks up the guitar. He plays a few chords. He puts it down. He gets a page of paper and a pencil. He begins almost furtively doodling. He stops, goes to the window, looks out and then goes back to his bed, picks up the paper and pencil and begins writing again.

35 EXT. - MOTEL - EARLY NEXT MORNING

35

ROSA LEE comes out of her house. She sees MAC already at work.

ROSA LEE

You feeling better?

MAC

Yes, ma'm.

36 INT. - ROSA LEE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

36

MAC, ROSA LEE and SONNY watching television.

ROSA LEE

Turn off the television now, Sonny, and get to bed. You have school tomorrow...

SONNY

Can I talk with you all a little bit first?

ROSA LEE

No, sir. Now tell us good night.

SONNY

Good night.

MAC

Good night.

ROSA LEE

Good night, Sonny.

He goes.

ROSA LEE

He's getting so big. He'll be grown and gone before I know it.

MAC

Do you have any other family?

ROSA LEE

No. I was the only child my mama and daddy had. They had me late in life. I lost my daddy two years after my husband was killed, and Mama died a year and a half ago this spring.

MAC

My mama and daddy are dead, too. I have a brother out in California some place, but we've lost track of each other.

SONNY

(calling)

You all stop talking. I can't get to sleep.

37 EXT. - YARD - BACK OF HOUSE - DAY

37

ROSA LEE is there spading up a garden. MAC sees her and goes over to her and takes the spade from her, and begins turning up the earth for her.

MAC

I haven't had a drink in two months.

(a pause)

I think the drinking is behind me.

37 CONTD

CONTD 37

ROSA LEE

Do you? I'm glad. I don't think it gets you anywhere.

MAC

Did you ever think about marrying again?

ROSA LEE

Yes. Have you?

MAC

I've thought about it lately. I guess it's no secret how I feel about you. A blind man could see that. Would you think about marrying me?

ROSA LEE

Yes, I will.

38 INT. - LIVING ROOM IN PREACHER'S HOUSE 38

MAC and ROSA LEE are standing in front of the preacher being married. SONNY is watching.

39 INT. - MOTEL - NIGHT 39

ROSA LEE, MAC and SONNY are watching television. They are still dressed in the clothes they wore earlier at the wedding.

40 EXT. - YARD OF A CONSOLIDATED COUNTRY SCHOOL - DAY 40

There are children, boys and girls, involved in games and sports.

ANGLE - SONNY

He is playing catch with a friend. LARUE, 14, comes up to him.

MEDIUM SHOT - SONNY AND LARUE

LARUE

Your daddy is dead.

SONNY has the ball and is about to throw it when he hears LARUE's statement, and holds on to the ball.

SONNY

I know he's dead.

LARUE
He got killed in Vietnam.

SONNY
I know that.

LARUE
What was his name?

SONNY
Carl Herbert Wadsworth. I
was named for him. I am
Carl Herbert Wadsworth, Junior.

LARUE
How come everybody calls you
Sonny?

SONNY
I don't know. They just do.

LARUE
That man your mama is married
to now ain't your daddy.

SONNY
I know that, fool. I know
what he is. He's my stepdaddy.

LARUE
Is he still a drunk?

SONNY starts for LARUE and they begin to fight.

41 EXT. - MOTEL - DAY

41

The school bus stops. SONNY gets off the bus. ROSA LEE comes out of the house to greet him. MAC is working in the yard, and watches as SONNY greets his mother. He says something to her that we can't hear, and then ROSA LEE crosses to MAC.

ROSA LEE
Sonny asked to go and see his
daddy's grave. He's never asked
that before.

42 EXT. - GRAVEYARD - DAY

42

The truck drives up. SONNY and ROSA LEE get out of the truck and walk into the graveyard. ROSA LEE turns and sees MAC still in the truck.

42 CONTD

CONTD 42

 ROSA LEE
Come on with us, Mac.

 MAC
All right.

He gets out of the truck and joins them.

43 EXT. - GRAVEYARD - DAY

43

ROSA LEE walks among the graves, followed by SONNY and MAC, to her former husband's grave. It has just a small tombstone on it.

 ROSA LEE
Here it is.
 (They stand looking
 at it)
I couldn't put down the day he
died, because the army didn't
know it.

 SONNY
Was there a big crowd at his
funeral?

 ROSA LEE
Yes, there was.

 SONNY
Did I go?

 ROSA LEE
No.

 SONNY
Why not?

 ROSA LEE
Because you were too little.

 SONNY
Did people cry at the funeral?

 ROSA LEE
Yes, they did.

 SONNY
Did you cry?

 ROSA LEE
Yes, I did.

SONNY

Did I ever see my Grandpa
and Grandma Wadsworth?

ROSA LEE

Uh huh ...

SONNY

When?

ROSA LEE

When you were a little boy. I
used to take you over there
every once in awhile, but they
live so far out in the country.

44

EXT. - A RUNDOWN FARMHOUSE SURROUNDED BY HALF-
TENDED FIELDS - DAY

44

We can see a ramshackle barn and chicken house in the distance. A clump of chinaberry trees, a hackberry tree. There are a few cows in the field, an acre of corn and two acres of sorghum. MR. WADSWORTH, the grandfather, is on the porch watching as the pickup truck pulls into the yard. When MAC stops the truck, he starts off the porch toward them, not recognizing ROSA LEE and SONNY at first. When he does, he seems glad to see them.

WADSWORTH

Well, I'll be.

(He calls to his wife)

Etta B., come on out here. You
got a surprise.

ROSA LEE and SONNY get out of the truck. Then MAC gets out. ETTA B. comes out of the house.

ETTA B.

Lord!

(She goes to greet
them)

I have to believe in signs, Lord.
I have to believe in signs. I
had a dream about you both last
night. It was a sad dream, I dreamt.
My boy was a prisoner of war in
Vietnam and they were torturing
him and you and Sonny and I were
on our way over there to beg for
his release. You look well. Both
of you. Don't they look fine,
Arthur?

WADSWORTH
I'll say they do.

 ROSA LEE
Sonny wanted to see his daddy's
grave, so we took him over this
morning and then we decided to
come and say hello to you.

 ETTA B.
Oh, good. Come on inside.

 ROSA LEE
We can't stay. Nobody is tend-
ing to the motel. I don't think
you all met my new husband. This
is Mac Sledge.

MAC shakes their hands.

 MAC
How do you do.

 ETTA B.
How long have you been married?

 ROSA LEE
A week.

 WADSWORTH
You from around here, Mr. Sledge?

 MAC
No, sir. East Texas.

 ETTA B.
How did you all meet?

 ROSA LEE
At the motel. He worked for
me a year at the motel, before
we married.

 ETTA B.
You be good to them. You hear
me. That's my boy's son. He's
our only grandchild.

 ROSA LEE
Oh, he's good to us.

 ETTA B.
He better be. Else he's gonna
he-

WADSWORTH

(laughing)
Don't she sound fierce, Mr.
Sledge?

MAC

Mac ...

WADSWORTH

Mac. Want a chew of tobacco?

MAC

No, thank you.

WADSWORTH

Don't you chew?

MAC

No, sir.

ETTA B.

Good for you! I wish he didn't.
Filthy habit. Sonny, do you
have a picture of your daddy?

SONNY

Yes, ma'm. I've got two. One
in his uniform and one out.

ETTA B.

I came across one the other day
when he was a boy. I want you
to have it.

SONNY

Thank you.

She goes inside.

WADSWORTH

How is your tourist court?

ROSA LEE

All right.

WADSWORTH

Making a living?

ROSA LEE

We do that. Since they built
the new highway, business isn't
exactly booming out our way and
we keep the expenses down by
doing all the work ourselves.

WADSWORTH
You paid for it yet?

ROSA LEE
Not yet. I'm getting the note
down little by little. One day
we may own the whole thing.

WADSWORTH
I'm on old age now. I've retired.
We jsut raise enough out here to
feed us.

ETTA B. comes out.

ETTA B.
Here ...

She hands the picture to SONNY. He looks at it.
WADSWORTH looks at it too.

WADSWORTH
How old are you now, Sonny?

SONNY
Ten.

ETTA B.
That was your daddy's age when
that picture was taken.

45 EXT. - YARD OF THE SLEDGE HOUSE - DAY.

45

MAC is working around the motel, he sees a car drive
up to the gas pumps.

MAC walks across the yard to the car. A REPORTER is
in the car.

REPORTER
Mr. Sledge?

MAC
Yes, sir.

REPORTER
You're Mac Sledge, the singer?

MAC
Yes. I was a singer, I mean.
I am Mac Sledge.

45 CONTD

REPORTER
Married to Dixie Scott?

There is a pause.

ANGLE - MAC

MAC
I've got nothing to say about
that.

REPORTER
She's never married again?
(Mac says nothing)
You're married again?
(Again Mac says nothing)
That your boy?
(no answer)

ANGLE - REPORTER

REPORTER
(to Mac)
It took me awhile to track you
down. I would appreciate an
interview.

MAC
I got nothing to say to anybody.

REPORTER
You still do any singing?
(no answer from Mac)
Writing any music?
(no answer)

ANGLE - MAC

REPORTER
I hear your new wife sings in
the Baptist Church.
(Mac says nothing)
Your daughter by your first wife
must be eighteen by now. Do you
ever see her?
(a pause)
Look. I'm going to do a story
on you. You ought to talk to
me to be sure I get it right.
Will you talk to me?

MAC
Nope.

REPORTER

Will you read what I've written
to be sure it's all right?

MAC

Nope.

A pause.

REPORTER

Do people around here know who
you are?

(no answer from Mac)

Did you know your former wife
is singing tomorrow night over
in Austin?

(no answer)

Are you going to hear her?
Maybe your daughter will be
along and come over here to
see you. She knows where you
are. I told her. Dixie told
me a lot about you. Don't you
want to tell me a few things
about her? She said drink
licked you. Do you still
drink?

No answer from MAC. MAC looks up the road, back out
across the field into the house and then he looks
directly at the REPORTER.

MAC

If you want gasoline, I'll sell
it to you. If not, I have to
go inside. I have work to do.

He goes into the house. The REPORTER makes a few last
notes and drives off.

46 INT. - HOUSE - DAY

46

ROSA LEE is there. MAC enters.

ROSA LEE

Who was that?

MAC

A damn reporter.

He goes back outside.

47 EXT. - HOUSE - DAY

47

SONNY is there. MAC comes out. He watches the man's car drive down the road. Then he starts around the back of the house and across the fields.

SONNY
(calling after him)
Can I go with you?

MAC
If you want to.

MAC continues on. SONNY follows after him at a distance.

48 INT. - REHEARSAL HALL - DAY

48

THREE YOUNG MEN, JAKE, BERTIE and HENRY are in the hall. They are tuning up their instruments. They are in their late twenties. They begin to play, JAKE singing a vocal. ROBERT, also in his late twenties, comes in with a newspaper and an album.

ROBERT
Guess who's living around here now?

JAKE
Who?

ROBERT
Mac Sledge.
(He points to a picture on the album)

BERTIE
Oh, go on.

ROBERT
It's true. Look here.
(He shows them the paper)
He's pumping gas.
(The boys look at the paper, and then at the album)
Let's go look him up.

JAKE
What are you going to say to him?

ROBERT
I don't know. I'll just talk to him. Come on.

He starts out. The others follow after him.

49 INT. - PICKUP TRUCK - DAY

49

ROBERT is driving. JAKE is beside him drinking a can of beer; reading the story about MAC in the paper. BERTIE and HENRY are in the back. ROBERT turns the radio on.

ROBERT

This is the band I was telling you about. You like it?

JAKE

No. They stink.

ROBERT

You've got no taste. That's your trouble.

JAKE

If we weren't any better than that, I'd quit tomorrow.

He finishes his beer and takes another from the six pack beside him.

HENRY

Give me a beer.

He hands a can to HENRY.

ROBERT

I just wish we were making half of what they're making.

JAKE

I'll settle for a tenth.

Another record is heard. They begin to sing it as they drive on.

49A EXT. - TRUCK - DAY

49A

The truck is going along the road, the boys singing as they drive.

50 EXT. - MOTEL - DAY

50

The truck pulls up and the boys get out.

JAKE

Jesus, it's a real dump.

BERTIE

What are we gonna say to him?

ROBERT

I don't know. Just tell him how much we've always admired him.

JAKE

Oh, Jesus, that's so insincere.

ROBERT

Why? You do admire him, don't you?

JAKE

I did. I don't know about now.

HENRY

I still admire him more than any singer I know of...

ROBERT

Me, too.

51 He drives up to the gas pump. They look around. 51
No one is in sight, but after a beat, ROSA LEE comes out of the house and they turn off the radio.

ROBERT

Fill 'er up.

She does so as the BOYS get out of the truck and look around. HENRY has finished his beer. He tosses the can towards a trash can, but it misses and rolls into the yard. JAKE holds the beer in his hand.

ROBERT

Excuse me. Is this where Mac Sledge stays?

ROSA LEE

Yes.

ROBERT

Is he here?

ROSA LEE

Yes.

ROBERT

Could we talk to him?

ROSA LEE

What about?

ROBERT

We just want to meet him.

HENRY

We're admirers of his.

ROBERT

I saw the story in the paper this morning. You see we have a band.

BERTIE

We're playing around this part of the country two or three nights a week.

HENRY

We didn't know what happened to him until we read this story and we certainly would like to say hello and pay our respects.

JAKE

We have all his records.

HENRY

We grew up on his records.

BERTIE

He inspires us.

The gas tank is filled.

ROSA LEE

That'll be eight dollars.

ROBERT

(Robert pays her)

Could we see him?

ROSA LEE

I'll ask him.

52 She goes inside. The boys look around curiously.
ROSA LEE comes out followed by MAC.

52

MAC

Hello, boys.

ROBERT

Hello, sir. I'm Robert Dennis and this is Bertie Gallagher, and this is Henry Steele and this is Jake Muhall.

MAC
Pleased to know you.

ROBERT
I was telling this lady..

MAC
This is my wife, Rosa Lee.

ROBERT
Pleased to know you. We were
saying we have a band, you know.

MAC
You four boys?

ROBERT
Yessir. I'm the manager, and I
play the guitar and Jake the
drums, and Bertie the guitar
and Henry the fiddle.

MAC
Who does your vocals?

ROBERT
We all take turns with that.

A pause.

BERTIE
You've been a real inspiration
to all of us.

MAC
That's most gratifying to hear.

JAKE
When are you gonna start singing
again, Sir?

ANGLE - MAC

MAC
I'm not going to start singing
again, son. I've lost it.
Those days of mine are gone.
I can't sing anymore. Not like
I want to anyway.

JAKE
Do you miss singing?

MAC

No. Oh, I miss some things.
But I don't miss a lot of it.
Anyway, wouldn't do any good
to miss it. I lost it. Where
you boys playing?

ANGLE - ROBERT

ROBERT

We play over in San Marcos on
the weekend, and then we go to
Waxahachie and then to Dripping
Springs and then to Lockhart.

MAC

Well, you're busy. Maybe I'll
come listen to you some night.

ROBERT

We'd sure like that. We wonder
if you have any advice for us.
Somebody just starting out the
way we are.

MAC

No, I don't really. Just sing
it the way you feel it.

The boys get in the truck.

MAC

So long, boys.

BOYS

So long.

They drive off. ROSA LEE sees the empty beer can that
HENRY has tossed into the yard, and she goes to pick it
up. MAC takes it from her and throws it into the trash
can.

53 EXT. - MOTEL - DAY

53

ANGLE - MAC

MAC seems preoccupied.

ROSA LEE

They were nice boys.

MAC

Yes, they were.

53 CONTD

CONTD 53

ROSA LEE

They were certainly complimentary to you. Don't that make you feel good?

MAC

I appreciated what they said.

54 EXT. - RIVER - DAY

54

MAC is there fishing. ROSA LEE is watching him.

MAC

Rosa Lee.

ROSA LEE

Yes?

MAC

You got any plans for tonight?

ROSA LEE

No.

(a pause)

Why did you ask me?

MAC

That reporter that was here yesterday said Dixie was going to be singing in Austin.

ROSA LEE

I heard that on the radio. She's going to be there for three nights, beginning tonight.

MAC

Three nights?

ROSA LEE

Yes.

A pause.

MAC

Rosa Lee...

ROSA LEE

Yes?

MAC

Would you like to go hear her sing?

54 CONTD

CONTD 54

ANGLE - ROSA LEE

ROSA LEE

Dixie Scott?

MAC

Yes.

ROSA LEE

No! I never want to lay eyes
on that woman!

MAC

Would you care if I went?

ROSA LEE

I don't care what you do, Mac,
as long as I don't have to
take a look at her or listen
to her.

55 EXT. - ROAD TO AUSTIN - LATE AFTERNOON 55

MAC is in his truck on the way to Austin.

56 EXT. - AUDITORIUM - AUSTIN - NIGHT 56

PEOPLE are going into the concert. MAC parks the truck.
He gets out of the truck.

57 INT. - AUDITORIUM - TICKET COUNTER - NIGHT 57

MAC goes to the window. He buys a ticket.

58 INT. - AUDITORIUM - NIGHT 58

It is crowded. DIXIE SCOTT, 35, is on stage singing
a fast, brassy country western song. She is flashily
dressed, an assured, experienced performer, but there
is something over produced and lifeless about what she
is doing.

ANGLE - DIXIE

As she finishes her song, waits for her applause, takes
her bow, and then signals the band to begin another song.
This one slow and sentimental.

59 ANGLE - MAC 59

As he listens. It is obvious it is not to his taste.
He gets up.

59 CONTD

CONTD 59

MAC
 (to the person seated
 next to him)
 Excuse me.

He makes his way to the aisle, saying "Excuse me," several times.

60 EXT. - AUDITORIUM - NIGHT 60

MAC comes out. He stands for a second and then starts toward the rear of the building. He passes a bus with DIXIE SCOTT printed on it in big letters. MAC continues on.

61 EXT. - BACK OF AUDITORIUM 61

MAC walks to the stage entrance.

62 EXT. - STAGE ENTRANCE 62

A DOORMAN is there. MAC goes up to him.

MAC
 Will you get a message to Harry
 Silver? Tell him Mac Sledge is
 here to see him.

63 The MAN goes. MAC reaches into the inner pocket of his coat and takes out an envelope. He gets a pen, and he writes on the envelope. HARRY SILVER, 40, comes out. 63

MAC
 Hello, Harry...

HARRY
 How are you, Mac? What are
 you doing around here?

MAC
 I live around here.

HARRY
 Is that so? Do you want to see
 the show? It's started but
 come on an' I'll pass you in.

MAC
 No, thanks.

HARRY
 How are things going?

MAC

Pretty well.

HARRY

Glad to hear it. Well, nice to have seen you.

(He starts away)

MAC

Harry, I have a song here. I thought you might give it to Dixie to look it over. If she likes it, maybe she'll record it.

He hands HARRY the envelope.

HARRY

All right.

MAC

I put my address on it. I'm not too far away.

HARRY

All right. Well, this is a surprise. I thought you'd given up the business.

MAC

I have. I just wrote this song and I thought...

HARRY

(interrupting)

Sure..I'll see she gets it.

(He starts away)

Are you working?

MAC

Yes.

HARRY

Where?

MAC

At a motel.

HARRY

Oh...Well, good luck.

MAC

Thanks.

HARRY goes.

64 MAC starts on. The DOORMAN comes back out. MAC 64
pauses and then goes over to the DOORMAN.

MAX

Is Dixie Scott's daughter
travelling with her?

DOORMAN

She's around someplace.

MAC

Would you tell her I'd like to
see her please.

DOORMAN

All right. I'll see if I can
find her.

He goes back inside the theater. After a moment MAC goes
inside, too.

65 INT. - BACKSTAGE 65

A hallway leading to dressing rooms and the stage. He
can hear the band and DIXIE singing from here. The
music stops. We can hear the audience applaud. DIXIE
SCOTT enters. There is a woman DRESSER following her
holding a mirror and some makeup. DIXIE takes the mirror
as she sees MAC.

DIXIE

(to dresser)

Ada, get Harry in here.
Right away.

The WOMAN leaves.

DIXIE

What the hell do you want here,
Mac?

MAC

I was hoping to say hello to
Sue Anne.

DIXIE

You leave her alone!

(calling..)

Harry! Harry!

(to Mac)

You stay away from her, or I
warn you, I'll have the law on
you. All she remembers about
you is a mean drunk trying to
beat up her Mama. You're dead

(MORE)

65 CONTD

DIXIE (contd)

as far as she is concerned, Mac.
She never thinks about you,
she's happy, so leave her alone.

(Harry comes in)

Harry, get him out of here. I
don't want him around here.

MAC

Lady, you're not telling me what
to do. You never have and you
never will.

HARRY

Come on, Mac. Let's don't
start any trouble.

MAC

Who the hell does she think
she is? She walks out here and
starts yelling at me.

DIXIE

He's jealous of me. He hates
me, because I'm successful and
he's not.

(Mac walks away. He
goes out the stage
door)

Harry, see that he leaves here!
I don't want him near Sue Anne.

HARRY starts out.

66 EXT. - STAGE DOOR

66

Harry comes out.

HARRY'S P.O.V.

He sees MAC walking towards the parking lot.

BACK TO HARRY AT STAGE DOOR

He goes inside.

67 EXT. - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

67

MAC comes into the lot and gets into the truck and
drives away.

68 INT. - DIXIE'S DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

68

DIXIE is there. HARRY comes in.

DIXIE
Did he leave?

HARRY
Yes.

DIXIE
Are you sure?

HARRY
Yes.

DIXIE
Have you seen Sue Anne?

HARRY
She's around.

DIXIE
Get her in here.

He goes to the door and calls.

HARRY
(calling)
Sue Anne..Sue Anne..

The DRESSER comes in with costumes.

DRESSER
She's down talking to the
musicians.

DIXIE
Harry, go tell her I said to
get her tail up here.

69 INT. - A SMALL ROOM BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

69

A GROUP OF MUSICIANS from Dixie's orchestra are here resting. SUE ANNE, 18, is with them. ONE OF THE MEN, HARRIS MENEFEE, 30, has his arm around her. HARRY comes in.

HARRY
Sue Anne, your Mama wants
you.

She starts out. HARRY follows.

70 INT. - DIXIE'S DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

70

She is changing her clothes. SUE ANNE AND HARRY come in.

DIXIE

(to Sue Anne)

I told you to wait up here in my dressing room when you weren't out front watching the show.

SUE ANNE

I'm sick of watching the show. I've seen it a hundred times.

DIXIE

Then stay up here.

SUE ANNE

I don't want to sit around here by myself.

DIXIE

Then watch T.V.

SUE ANNE

I'm sick of that, too.

She starts out.

DIXIE

Where are you going?

SUE ANNE

I'm going back to the hotel.

DIXIE

Why?

SUE ANNE

To change my clothes. I've got a date tonight.

DIXIE

Who with?

SUE ANNE

None of your business.

DIXIE

God damn it! What do you mean it's none of my business?

HARRY

Now, come on, Honey. Don't get excited. You still have the rest of the show to do.

70 CONTD

CONTD 70

DIXIE

She's going on no date unless
I know who she's going with.

SUE ANNE

Try and stop me!

DIXIE grabs her. SUE ANNE yanks her arm free and runs
out. DIXIE follows to the door.

DIXIE

(screaming)

Sue Anne..Sue Anne..Sue Anne..

(She turns to Harry)

Harry, go after her. Tell her
I said she'd better get back
here and get back here fast.

He runs out after her.

71 EXT. - AUDITORIUM PARKING LOT - NIGHT 71

SUE ANNE comes running out of the auditorium and into the
parking lot. She gets into her car and drives away.
HARRY comes running out. He sees her car leaving. He
runs to his car, gets in and follows after.

72 EXT. - MOTEL - NIGHT 72

MAC drives up in his truck. There are lights on in the
house. He gets out of the truck and goes into the house.
He sees a car in front of a cabin, its lights are on.

73 INT. - SLDEGE HOUSE - NIGHT 73

ROSA LEE is there. MAC comes in.

ROSA LEE

You are home early.

MAC

Uh huh.

ROSA LEE

The concert couldn't have been
very long.

MAC

It was the regular time. I
left early.

ROSA LEE

Why?

MAC

I didn't care too much for it.

ROSA LEE

Why?

MAC

I just didn't. Sonny in bed?

ROSA LEE

Uh huh.

MAC

What have you been doin'?

ROSA LEE

Not much of anything.

MAC

Did you watch the T.V.?

ROSA LEE

No.

A pause. MAC looks at her.

MAC

Why are you so quiet?

(She shrugs her shoulders)

Are you mad about something?

(She doesn't answer)

Are you mad because I went to hear Dixie sing?

(a pause)

My God, woman, don't tell me you are jealous of her. Rosa Lee, are you jealous of Dixie Scott?

ROSA LEE

Maybe I am.

MAC

Why?

ROSA LEE

Well, because..you know..

MAC

No, I don't know.

ROSA LEE

Well..She's rich and famous, and you were married to her.

MAC

Well, My God, don't be jealous of her. She's poison to me, Rosa Lee. She is absolutely poison to me.

ROSA LEE

Well, why did you want to go watch her sing then?

MAC

Someday I'll tell you.

ROSA LEE

Why can't you tell me now?

MAC

Because I can't.

ROSA LEE

Why?

MAC

Because I can't.

ROSA LEE

Why can't you?

MAC

Because I can't, God damn it! Don't you understand English?

ROSA LEE

I understand English, but you don't have to yell at me.

MAC

I don't mean to yell. I'm jumpy tonight.

ROSA LEE

Why?

MAC

I just am.

A pause.

ROSA LEE

Did you go hoping you could see your daughter?

(a pause)

Mac, is that it?

(MORE)

ROSA LEE (contd)

(a pause)

If that's the reason I could understand that. You could just come right out and tell me.

MAC

I'd be lying to you if I told you that was the reason.

ROSA LEE

Why, didn't you want to see her?

MAC

Sure, I wanted to see her. Of course, I did. But I figured Dixie wouldn't let me, and I was right. While I was there I did try to see her and Dixie saw me and pitched a fit.

(a pause)

She says Sue Anne don't want to see me. She says I'm a dead man to her.

ROSA LEE

Do you believe that?

MAC

I don't know.

ROSA LEE

How long since you've seen her?

MAC

Since before the divorce. It must be six years.

74 EXT. - BACKYARD OF THE HOUSE - DAY - TWO DAYS LATER 74

MAC is washing the truck. ROSA LEE is seated watching him. A car pulls up. HARRY is in the car. He gets out and starts toward MAC. MAC walks over to HARRY.

MAC

Hello, Harry. Come on in.

HARRY

(He hands him the music)

Dixie insisted I bring this back over here myself. She says it's

(MORE)

HARRY (contd)
no good. But she said to tell
you even if it was any good she
wouldn't sing it. She said she
meant what she said. She wants
nothing to do with you ever
again.

MAC
That's all right.
(a pause. He takes
the music)
I didn't want anything to do
with her either. I just kind
of thought the song was pretty
good for her. I guess I was
wrong. Did you look at it?

HARRY
Yep. I didn't like it either.
Mac..The business is all changed
you know.

MAC
I guess.

HARRY
If you want to though, I'll
take it on with me and show
it around. I might find some-
body who would like it.

MAC
That's all right, thank you.
I'll keep it.

HARRY
How are you doing?

MAC
I'm all right.

HARRY
You makin' a living here?

MAC
We get by.
(He looks over at
Rosa Lee)
Rosa Lee, this is an old friend
of mine, Harry Silvers.

HARRY
Pleased to know you.

ROSA LEE

Thank you. Pleased to know you.

HARRY

I'm sorry Dixie acted so ugly about you seeing Sue Anne. I wish you'd asked me about it first. Maybe I could have done something about it. I still think I can if you still want to see her after Dixie gets over being stubborn.

MAC

How is Sue Anne?

HARRY

She's grown up. Of course, Dixie spoils the life out of her. But you can't blame her. She's all she's got, you know. Well, nice to meet you, Mrs. Sledge.

ROSA LEE

Thank you. Nice to meet you.

HARRY

So long, Mac. Good luck.

MAC

Good luck to you.

HARRY drives off. They stand watching him go. After a beat MAC starts to go into the house and then he pauses, looks over at ROSA LEE and then goes to her.

75 CLOSE SHOT - MAC AND ROSA LEE

75

ANGLE - MAC

MAC

I don't give a God damn about any of this no more. So what in hell is wrong with me. I guess it's just hearing about Sue Anne being grown up and all and being spoiled by Dixie.

ANGLE - ROSA LEE

ROSA LEE

Oh, sure. I know that's hard on you not being able to see her.

75 CONTD

CONTD 75

She goes to MAC. She takes his hand.

ANGLE - MAC

As he listens.

ROSA LEE (contd)

I love you, you know, and I would hate for anything to ever come between us, but I swear if I ever had to give up Sonny I don't know what I'd do.

ANGLE - ROSA LEE

ROSA LEE (contd)

When his Daddy died and people said Oh, it's too bad you're left with this little boy to raise - too bad for who? I said - not for me! I consider it a privilege to have this blessed child to raise. And I did, too.

ANGLE - MAC AND ROSA LEE

ROSA LEE (contd)

And every night when I say my prayers and I thank the good Lord for all his many blessings and tender mercies to me, Sonny and you head the list.

(a pause)

Would you sing the song you wrote to me?

MAC

No, it's no good.

ROSA LEE

I sure would like to hear it.

He hands it to her.

MAC

You sing it.

ROSA LEE

I can't read music. You know that. Somebody would have to teach it to me.

MAC

Well, I'll think about it.

75 CONTD

CONTD 75

ROSA LEE

Mac...

MAC

What?

ROSA LEE

Please sing it for me.

MAC

All right. But it's kind of
corny.

ROSA LEE

I don't care.

They go inside.

76 INT. - HOUSE - DAY

76

ROSA LEE and MAC enter. He goes to the sink and gets a glass of water. She goes into their bedroom and comes out with the guitar. She gives him the guitar.

He plays a few chords on the guitar and then stops.

MAC

I've got no voice left. Anyway,
I don't like the song, and I
never did. And I never will.

ROSA LEE

Mac.

MAC is angry now.

MAC

And don't feel sorry for me,
Rosa Lee. I'm not dead, you
know.

ROSA LEE

I'm not feeling sorry for you.

He puts the guitar on the table. He goes outside.

77 EXT. - HOUSE - DAY

77

MAC comes outside. He starts walking fast toward the garden. He sees a can and kicks it out of his way. He goes into the garden plot and starts weeding with his hands. He is angry and upset. She comes toward him. She watches him and is obviously anxious about him but

77 CONTD

CONTD 77

doesn't let him know her feelings. She starts to work beside him. After a beat, she begins to sing a hymn, singing it to cover her concern for him. He works on in silence for a beat. He stands up and stretches.

MAC

I'm going uptown.

He goes toward the pickup truck. She continues working, watching him as he gets into the truck and drives away. She straightens up then, shakes the dirt off her hands.

78 EXT. - HIGHWAY - DAY

78

MAC speeds down the highway in the pickup truck. He comes to a bar-restaurant. He pulls the truck into the parking lot, gets out and goes inside.

79 INT. - BAR - RESTAURANT

79

It is dark inside. There are TWO MEN at the bar drinking bottles of beer. MAC enters. He goes to a table. A WAITER, a man in his forties, comes up to him.

WAITER

What do you want?

MAC

I don't know yet.

WAITER

You want a beer or you want food or do you want a set up?

MAC

I don't know what I want yet.

WAITER

Our specials today...

MAC

I don't want to hear what the specials are now. When I want to hear what they are I'll let you know.

(The waiter walks away and goes over to the juke box with some coins)

Would you mind not playing that damn music?

WAITER

One of the other fellows asked

79 CONTD

CONTD 79

He puts the coins in the box. The music starts, it is one of DIXIE's records. MAC gets up and leaves.

MAN
(calling to waiter)
What's wrong with him?

WAITER
I don't know.

80 EXT. - RESTAURANT-BAR - DAY

80

MAC comes out. He gets into his car and goes speeding down the highway until he gets behind an old truck filled with lumber going very slowly. He is forced to slow down, follows the truck for awhile and then suddenly backs his car up, turns around and speeds again down the highway in the opposite direction. A car backs out of a blind drive. MAC has to veer off the road and halfway into a ditch to avoid a collision. MAC jumps out of his truck and starts toward the car.

MAC
(screaming)
Why the hell don't you watch
what you're doing?

MAN
You better watch what you're
doing, Mister. You must be
crazy driving as fast as you
were going..

The MAN drives off. MAC gets back into his truck and pulls out of the ditch onto the highway and resumes his speed. Up ahead he sees a school bus stopping every few yards to let a child off the bus. Again he turns his truck around and speeds away in the opposite direction.

81 EXT. - HIGHWAY - LIQUOR STORE - DAY

81

MAC drives his truck up; parking it and gets out and goes into the store.

82 EXT. - FILLING STATION - DAY

82

ROSA LEE walks to the edge of the road; she is looking up the road.

83 EXT. - HIGHWAY - LIQUOR STORE - DAY

83

MAC comes out of the store. He has a bottle of whiskey. He gets into the truck and drives off.

84 INT. - HOUSE - LATER - ROSA LEE GETTING SUPPER - 84
LATE AFTERNOON

A pickup truck drives up. ROBERT and JAKE are in the truck.

85 EXT. - HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON 85

ROSA LEE comes out the door. ROBERT is out of the truck.

ROBERT

Is Mr. Sledge around?

ROSA LEE

No he's not. To tell you the truth I don't know where he is. And I don't know just at the moment when he'll be back. Can I give him a message for you?

ROBERT

Oh, no. I just wanted to holler at him. If he was here. We're playing a dance near here this Saturday and I wondered if we could leave one of our posters with you.

ROSA LEE

Sure.

ROBERT gets a poster out of the truck and hands it to her.

ROBERT

Thanks.

He starts for the truck.

ROSA LEE

Do either of you read music?

ROBERT

Sure, I do.

ROSA LEE

I wonder if you have time to do me a favor? My husband found one of his old songs. It's not much of one, you know, but he showed it to me and I kind of wanted to learn it and surprise him by singing it for him.

ROBERT

Sure.

85 CONTD

CONTD 85

ROSA LEE

Let me get it.

She goes inside. They get out of the truck. She comes outside. She hands the music to Robert. He looks at it.

ROBERT

When did he write this?

ROSA LEE

Oh, a long time ago, I guess.

Robert has begun humming to himself trying to read the music. ROSA LEE doesn't finish her sentence. She watches him. JAKE looks over ROBERT's shoulder.

86 INT. - HOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT

86

SONNY and ROSA LEE are in the house. She is looking at the music, still trying to figure out the piece.

SONNY

I wonder where Mac is?

ROSA LEE

I don't know.

SONNY

He's older than you are. He's fifteen years older than you.

ROSA LEE

That's no secret, Sonny.

SONNY

I didn't know it until they told me at school.

ROSA LEE

I would have told you if you had asked me.

SONNY

Was my Daddy older than you?

ROSA LEE

Two years. I was sixteen when we got married. Had you at seventeen. I was a widow at eighteen.

SONNY

How come he went to Vietnam?

ROSA LEE

He got drafted. He didn't know
I was going to have you until
after the Army got him.

SONNY

Boy at school says his Daddy
told him all they learned in
Vietnam was to take dope. Do
you think that's right?

ROSA LEE

I don't know, Sonny. I hope not.

SONNY

Do you think my Daddy took drugs?

ROSA LEE

No, I don't think so.

SONNY

Kids at school take drugs.

ROSA LEE

Don't you ever let me hear of
you taking them. I'll have
your hide if I do. You hear me?

He looks at her.

SONNY

What are you so mad about?

ROSA LEE

Never mind that. You just pay
attention to me about them drugs.

(He starts out)

Where are you going?

SONNY

I don't know. I sure don't
want to stay around you.

ROSA LEE

I'm sorry, Sonny. Come here
to me. I didn't mean to get
so excited.

He goes to her. She holds him. She hums a bit of a song
as she holds him.

SONNY

What song is that?

86 CONTD

CONTD 86

ROSA LEE

That's a song Mac wrote.

SONNY

I wish he'd come on home.
Where do you think he is?

ROSA LEE

I don't know Sonny. Your
guess is as good as mine.

She holds him and begins again to hum the song.

87 EXT. - HIGHWAY - MAC - NIGHT

87

He drives down the highway past the filling station. He
can see the lights on in the house. He continues on.
He turns around and goes back past the house, again
continuing on.88 INT. - HOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT - ROSA LEE AND
SONNY ARE WATCHING TELEVISION

88

SONNY

I'm going to bed.
(Sonny starts to
walk away)
Where do you think Mac is?

ROSA LEE

I don't know.

SONNY

Wake me up when he gets here.

ROSA LEE

All right.

SONNY leaves.

SONNY

Good night.

ROSA LEE

Good night.

She continues watching the T.V. for a beat and then turns
it off.

SONNY

(calling from other
room)
Is he here?

ROSA LEE

No.

SONNY

(calling)

Why did you turn off the T.V.
then?

ROSA LEE

Because I'm sick of it.

SONNY

Are you going to bed?

ROSA LEE

Yes.

SONNY

When?

ROSA LEE

Soon. Now go on to sleep.

She goes to the window and looks out. She hears a car in the distance. She stands watching as it gets closer and then speeds on by. She goes outside.

89 EXT. - YARD - ROSA LEE COMES OUT OF THE HOUSE - NIGHT 89

It is a clear Texas night. She looks up at the sky and then she walks to the road and looks in both directions. She walks anxiously up and down the road. She starts down the road, thinking momentarily she might go looking for him then realizes the futility of it. She goes back into the house.

90 INT. - HOUSE - NIGHT - ROSA LEE ENTERS 90

She turns out the lights in the living room. She opens the door to her son's room.

91 INT. - SONNY'S ROOM - NIGHT - SHE ENTERS 91

He is sound asleep and snoring slightly. She goes quietly over to his bed and looks down at him and then goes over to the bureau and sees the picture of her first husband, his father. She takes it up and looks at it and then puts it back on the bureau and then goes out.

92 EXT. - HIGHWAY - MAC IN THE TRUCK 92

He again drives past the filling station and the house. He continues on.

ROSA LEE enters the bedroom. She undresses and gets into bed. She closes her eyes and says quietly to herself.

ROSA LEE

"Show me thy way, Oh Lord, teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me for thou art the God of my salvation, on thee do I wait all the day. Remember, Oh Lord, thy tender mercies and thy loving kindness. For thou has been ever of old."

She lies in bed listening; she hears a car. She gets out of bed and runs to the window. She hears it slow down and turn into the driveway. She hurries back into bed and lies in the dark listening. She hears the car stop. She closes her eyes and pretends to be asleep. She hears the car door open and then shut. She hears the front door open and someone come into the living room. Then there is silence, and she opens her eyes listening. She hears footsteps again and she closes her eyes. The door to the room opens and we see MAC enter the room. He stands inside the door. He comes into the room. He begins to undress. He goes over to his side of the bed and stands looking out the window. Then turns and looks over at her. She opens her eyes and looks up at him.

ROSA LEE

Mac? Is that you?

MAC

Yes.

ROSA LEE

What time is it?

MAC

Late.

(a pause)

I'm not drunk. I bought a bottle but I didn't get drunk. I poured it all out. I didn't have one drink.

ROSA LEE

Did you have anything to eat?

MAC

Nope.

ROSA LEE

Are you hungry?

93 CONTD

CONTD 93

MAC

I guess so.

ROSA LEE gets out of bed.

ROSA LEE

Come on. I'll get you something
to eat.She puts a robe on and goes out to the kitchen. He
follows.

94 INT. - KITCHEN - ROSA LEE ENTERS FOLLOWED BY MAC 94

ROSA LEE

How hungry are you?

MAC

I'm not very hungry.

ROSA LEE

Want some eggs?

MAC

No.

ROSA LEE

Some chili?

MAC

No. I little soup will do me.

She opens a can of soup. She heats it at the stove.

ANGLE - MAC

MAC

I rode by here six or seven
times. I could see you all
sitting here watching T.V.
Did you see me ride by?

ROSA LEE

No.

MAC

I rode all over town tonight.
Started twice for San Antonio,
turned around and came back.
Started for Austin, started for
Dallas. Then turned around and
came back.

(a pause)

She takes the soup off the stove, puts it in a bowl.

ROSA LEE

You know that song you took
over to that man in Austin.

MAC

Yes.

ROSA LEE

You remember those four boys
had a band that came by to see
you the other day?

MAC

Yes.

ANGLE - ROSA LEE

ROSA LEE

Well, two of them came by here
after you were gone and left
off a poster.

(She points to it)

I asked them if they could read
music and one of them could and
so I asked if they would teach
me that song of yours as I thought
I would try and surprise you by
singing it for you when you got
home.

ANGLE - MAC

ROSA LEE

I think it's a pretty song, Mac,
and so does he- and he was
wondering if you would let him
and his band play it.

(a pause)

I said I couldn't answer that.
He'd have to ask you.

(a pause)

I said I would ask you. I said
it was an old song and you might
not...

MAC

(interrupting)

It's no old song. I only wrote
it last week. That's why I got
so upset when Harry said he
didn't like it.

(MOPES)

MAC (contd)

(He goes into the bedroom. He comes out with a small trunk)
I been writing them all along.
I got even more in here.
(a pause)
Did you say the boy liked the song?

ROSA LEE

He said he did. I sure liked it. What are the names of the other songs?

MAC

One is called, "God Has Forgiven Me, Why Can't You?", and one is called, "The Romance Is Over."

He opens the trunk, and we can see sheet music inside. She takes the music and looks at it.

MAC

Did you learn the song?

ROSA LEE

Not good enough to sing it.
(a pause)
I wish I could read music. How did you learn to read music?

ANGLE - MAC

MAC

I had an auntie taught me. We had an old half-busted piano, and she sat me down at that piano all one summer when I came in from the fields, and she taught me.

He gets his guitar. He plays a little.

MAC

I've been missing my music. I may not be any good anymore, but that don't keep you from missing it.

95 He plays a little bit of the song she has learned as if trying to make up his mind about its value.
SONNY comes out.

95

SONNY

When did you get home?

ROSA LEE

He got here a little while ago.

SONNY

You said you were going to
wake me.

ROSA LEE

I forgot.

MAC continues playing. We sense now he is enjoying it.
SONNY listens for a beat.

SONNY

Good night.

ROSA LEE

Good night...

SONNY goes on back to bed. MAC continues playing. He
pauses and looks up at ROSA LEE.

MAC

I don't care if you give that
song to those kids to play.

ROSA LEE

All right.

He continues picking at his guitar.

MAC

Come on try it with me.

He plays a few chords. She starts to sing. She sings
a few phrases. ROSA LEE cries.

ROSA LEE

I'm sorry. I just got nervous
tonight.

He puts his arm around her.

ROBERT AND THE BAND are playing. There are about TWENTY
COUPLES dancing or at the tables.

97 EXT. - COUNTRY DANCE HALL - NIGHT

97

SUE ANNE AND HER MUSICIAN FRIEND, HARRIS drive up in her car. He is driving.

HARRIS

Well, I found it.

SUE ANNE

Have you heard them before?

HARRIS

No. I just met this guy, Jake, at a bar last night and he told me about his band and that they were playing tonight, and your father had given them a new song to play.

SUE ANNE

I don't want them to know who my father is or my mother.

HARRIS

Why?

SUE ANNE

I just don't. If I'm going to make it, I want to make it on my own.

He takes sheet music out of the car.

SUE ANNE

What are you taking the music in for?

HARRIS

So you can sing with the band. They may not have these songs.

SUE ANNE

I'm not sure I want to sing tonight.

HARRIS

Jesus, Sue Anne, what did we come out here for then? I told them I had this terrific young singer that I wanted them to hear. I thought you wanted experience as a singer.

SUE ANNE

I do.

97 CONTD

CONTD 97

HARRIS

Well, how in the hell are you going to get experience if you don't sing, Jesus!

SUE ANNE

Please, not tonight. I don't feel like it tonight.

They get out of the car and go inside.

98 INT. - DANCE HALL - NIGHT

98

The band is taking a break. SUE ANNE AND HARRIS enter and go to a table.

HARRIS

I'll get set ups.

He crosses over to the bar. JAKE sees him and goes to him.

JAKE

Well, you found us.

HARRIS

Yes, no trouble, you gave me good directions.

(Harris gets set ups
and they start back
to his table)

How late do you play?

JAKE

Until twelve. How was your show tonight?

HARRIS

All right.

(They are at the table
now. Harris puts the
set ups on the table)

Sue Anne, this is Jake. He's with the band. Sue Anne is the singer I was telling you about.

JAKE

Are we going to hear her sing tonight?

SUE ANNE

Not tonight.

HARRIS

Are you going to play that song of
Mac Sledge's?

JAKE

We already have, but I'll get
them to play it again if you
want to hear it.

HARRIS

Thanks.

JAKE

He doesn't live far from here,
you know. He and his wife own
a motel. They don't have an
easy time.

HARRIS

Do you like the song?

JAKE

It's O.K. He's written better.

99 EXT. - DIXIE'S HOTEL ROOM

99

She and HARRY are there.

HARRY

Come on, Honey. Time for bed.

DIXIE

No. I won't go to bed until my
baby is home and safe. I know
who she's with, you know. I'm
gonna warn that musician to stay
away from her or I'm gonna fire
him.

(a pause)

Oh, it's always something..

HARRY

I'm almost sorry I told you
about them, but I thought you
should know.

DIXIE

I'm glad you did.

(a pause)

What was the name of that damn
song Mac sent me?

HARRY

I forget.

DIXIE
Let me see it.

HARRY
I took it back to him like you
told me to.

DIXIE
Wasn't any good, was it?

HARRY
I didn't think so. Not for
you, anyway..

DIXIE
What do you mean, not for me?
You think it's good for somebody?
(Sue Anne enters)
Were you out with that musician
again?

SUE ANNE
Yes.

DIXIE
I told you not to see him anymore.

SUE ANNE
I told you I was going to. I'm
going to be a singer and he's
going to help me.

DIXIE
How are you going to be a
singer? You have to have a
voice, you know, to be a singer.

SUE ANNE
I have a voice.

DIXIE
You do not. You have no voice
at all. None.

SUE ANNE
Of course, you don't think so.
You're jealous of me, because
I'm young and you're old. But
I'm going to show you I can sing
every bit as good as you can.

She goes into her room, slamming the door.

99 CONTD

CONTD 99

DIXIE

Harry, tell her I said to march
herself back out here.

He goes to the door and tries to open it.

HARRY

It's locked.

DIXIE goes to it. She pounds on the door.

DIXIE

(screaming)

Sue Anne..Sue Anne..Open the
door. You hear me? Open the
door...

100 EXT. - STREET IN TRAVIS - A SMALL TEXAS TOWN - DAY 100

ROBERT AND HIS FRIENDS drive their car slowly down the
street. They see MAC.

ROBERT

There he is.

(He calls and waves)

Hey, Mr. Sledge...

MAC looks up and sees them and waves back. ROBERT parks
his truck. He and his friends get out and go over to MAC.

ROBERT

Remember us?

MAC

Sure. How are you?

ROBERT

Pretty good.

MAC starts into the supermarket. They follow him.

101 INT. - SUPERMARKET - DAY 101

MAC enters, followed by the BOYS. He takes a grocery list
out of his pocket, gets a shopping cart and starts down
the aisle. The BOYS are trailing after him talking all
the while.

MAC looks for groceries on the list as he listens to
them and talks.

ROBERT

We went out to the motel looking
for you and your wife said you

(MORE)

ROBERT (contd)

were in town. We've been playing that song you wrote. I wish you could come around some night and hear us play.

MAC

Well, I might do that one of these nights.

ANGLE - ROBERT

ROBERT

You know we record every now and then. We sell enough to break even, so the record company is always willing to try us again. I'm the business manager.

MAC

I remember your saying so.

ROBERT

I call on all the stations-- talk to the disc jockeys to see if they will play our records. I've been doing this now for four years and I've gotten to know some of these boys pretty well.

ANGLE - MAC

As he listens, he continues his search for groceries.

ROBERT

We were going to record a song I wrote and a song Jake wrote, but I was talking to some of my friends at the radio stations, telling them about this song you let us play of yours and they said we should try to talk you into letting us record that one...

(a pause)

Of course, they thought the best idea would be to try to get you to give us another song, too, and then my friends in the radio station..-

MAC

I do have another song that's free and clear. Come by the house and I'll give it to you.

ROBERT

Thanks.

MAC starts down another aisle. The BOYS follow.

ANGLE - ROBERT

ROBERT

You see we've been at this four years now. Everybody is married but me. Jake has a little boy, five, and we have to travel all over the state to get engagements. They all overbook, you know, and last Friday and Saturday we arrived over in South Texas and found they couldn't use us.

ANGLE - MAC

As he listens.

HENRY

We didn't clear but a hundred dollars apiece last week and that don't hardly pay for our gas any more.

MAC

How many recordings have you made?

ROBERT

Three. But I haven't exactly told you the truth about that though. They broke even on our records but even so, they won't record us again with our songs. But like I said we heard last week they would record us if we recorded two of your songs.

MAC

You have my permission. I told you that.

ROBERT

Yessir. But it's just not your songs. They want you to sing them.

MAC

Who does?

ROBERT

The record company.

MAC

What record company?

ROBERT

The Aztec.

MAC

Never heard of it.

ROBERT

Yessir. It's just a small Houston outfit, but they do a pretty good job.

MAC

How do you make it on a hundred a week?

ROBERT

We all have other jobs. Jake is in construction. I'm a substitute teacher.

MAC

Let me think about it.

ROBERT

It would sure mean a lot to us. You understand that. It would be a real incentive for us.

MAC

When do you rehearse?

ROBERT

We don't have any definite time. Whenever we can take off from our day jobs.

ANGLE - MAC

As he looks again at his shopping list, checking the groceries in the cart and then he turns to the BOYS.

MAC

All right. I may give it a try with you just to see how it sounds to me. I ain't promising nothing, you understand, and if I don't like the way it sounds, we'll just back away from it. Give me a couple of days to think it over.

101 CONTD

CONTD 101

ROBERT

Yessir.

MAC starts through the check-out counter, the cashier looks at him.

CASHIER

Mister...

(He comes over to her)

Were you really Mac Sledge?

MAC

Yes, Ma'm. I guess I was.

She starts checking the groceries.

102 EXT. - FILLING STATION - LATE AFTERNOON

102

SONNY comes out of the house. SUE ANNE, 18, is there in her car. SONNY goes to her.

SUE ANNE

Is this where Mac Sledge lives?

SONNY

Uh huh.

SUE ANNE

Is he here?

SONNY

No.

SUE ANNE

I'm his daughter. Could you tell me where he is?

SONNY

I'll ask my Mama.

103 INT. - HOUSE

103

ROSA LEE is there. SONNY enters.

SONNY

You know who that is out in the car?

ROSA LEE

No.

SONNY

That's Mac's daughter.

103 CONTD

CONTD 103

ROSA LEE goes to the window and looks out. She goes outside.

104 EXT. - FILLING STATION - LATE AFTERNOON

104

ROSA LEE comes out of the house.

ROSA LEE

Hello. Mac is in town. He should be here in a little. Won't you come inside and wait for him?

ANGLE - SUE ANNE

SUE ANNE

Who are you?

ROSA LEE

I'm his wife. Rosa Lee.

SUE ANNE

Was that his son?

ANGLE - ROSA LEE

ROSA LEE

No, that is my son. I was married before, too.

105 EXT. - HIGHWAY - LATE AFTERNOON

105

MAC is in his truck driving home.

106 INT. - LIVING ROOM - ROSA LEE AND MAC'S HOUSE

106

ROSA LEE is there with SUE ANNE. MAC enters. He and SUE ANNE look at each other.

SUE ANNE

I recognize you. Do you recognize me?

MAC

Yes, I do.

SUE ANNE

How did you recognize me?

MAC

I just did.

ROSA LEE gets

ROSA LEE

You all excuse me. Come on,
Sonny.

They leave.

SUE ANNE

You've changed. You don't look
like your pictures any more.

MAC

Don't I? Well, God knows when
the last picture of me was taken.

(a pause)

It don't make a whole lot of
difference about this, but I
did try once in a while to get
in touch with you. I wrote a
few letters. Did you ever get
them?

SUE ANNE

No.

MAC

Well, your Mama didn't have to
give them to you. The courts
gave her complete jurisdiction.
And quite rightly, I guess,
considering my state at the time.

(a pause)

Are you still going to school?

ANGLE - SUE ANNE

SUE ANNE

No, I've finished. I've been
off at boarding school. Mama
says I can travel with her as
long as I want to, and I might
do that. If we don't kill each
other in the meantime. I told
Mama I was coming here. She
told me she would have me arrested
if I did. But Harry reminded her
that I was eighteen now and she
had no jurisdiction over me any
longer.

(a pause)

Mama said you tried to kill her
once.

106 CONTD

CONTD 106

ANGLE - MAC

MAC

I did.

SUE ANNE

Why did you try to kill her?

MAC

I don't know. She got me mad
some way. I was drunk...

ANGLE - SUE ANNE

SUE ANNE

Some one told Mama the other
night you were the best country
and Western singer they ever
heard. Mama threw a glass of
whiskey in her face. She said
they were just saying that to
spite her. Do you think you
ever will sing again?

ANGLE - MAC

MAC

I think about it once in awhile.
Sometimes I think I'd like to
earn a little money again to
make things a little easier around
here, to help out if you ever
needed anything...

ANGLE - SUE ANNE

SUE ANNE

I don't need any money, Mama set
up a trust fund for me out of all
the royalties she ever earned
singing the songs you wrote. I
can buy myself anything I want.

(a pause)

Anything I've got has come from
your music.

ANGLE - MAC

MAC

I'm happy for that.

(a pause)

Anyway it wasn't just my music.

(MORE)

MAC (contd)

It was your Mama singing it, too.
You mustn't forget that.

(a pause)

Will you have supper with us?

SUE ANNE

Thank you. No. I have a date
tonight. He's playing in Mama's
band. We have to sneak around,
because Mama don't like him.
Do you want to meet him? He
wants to meet you.

MAC

Well, I don't think that's such
a good idea. I really wouldn't
want your Mama to think I was
ganging up on her behind her
back.

SUE ANNE

I'll tell her I'm bringing him
out here.

ANGLE - MAC

MAC

Well, all right then.

SUE ANNE

What about tomorrow afternoon?

MAC

That's fine.

SUE ANNE

What time?

MAC

Anytime. I'll be here.

SUE ANNE

Around two o'clock?

MAC

Sure.

SUE ANNE

You know you've never spoken my
name once since I've been here.
Don't you know my name?

106 CONTD

CONTD 106

ANGLE - MAC

MAC

Sure I know your name. I've just been kind of figuring out to myself what I ought to call you. When you were a little girl, I used to call you, Sister. I started to call you that this time when I saw you, but I didn't know if it would mean anything to you or not. Of if you'd remember my doing that.

(a pause)

How long are you going to be in Texas?

SUE ANNE

We leave after Mama plays Houston and Corpus.

MAC

Where do you go from there?

SUE ANNE

Shreveport.

(Sue Anne gets up.

She starts away.

A pause)

There was a song you used to sing to me, I think. Something about a dove. Mama said she never heard you sing it to me. I think it went: "The wings of a snow white dove-- He sends his something, something love...."

MAC

I don't remember.

He follows her outside.

107(a) EXT. - HOUSE - DAY

107(a)

SUE ANNE comes out, followed by MAC. He follows her to her car. She gets in and she starts the motor.

SUE ANNE

My boyfriend, Harris, thinks I ought to sing.

MAC

Do you want to?

107(a) CONTD

CONTD 107(a)

SUE

I don't know. Maybe, if I'm
any good. I might sing for you
tomorrow so you can tell me what
you think.

She drives on. He watches for a beat as the car goes
on down the road.

107(b) INT. - HOUSE - DAY

107(b)

MAC enters and sits down, begins to sing "On the
wings of a snow white dove, he sends his pure sweet
love, a sign from above, on the wings of a dove."

108 EXT. - RIVER - LATE AFTERNOON

108

ROSA LEE and SONNY are there. In the distance they
see MAC walking towards them. They go to meet him.
There is a squawking of geese overhead.

SONNY

Look at the geese going south for
the winter. Where do they land?

MAC

Down on the coast.

ROSA LEE

I bet you were surprised to see
your daughter.

MAC

I was.

ROSA LEE

How long is she goin' to be around
these parts?

MAC

She leaves for the coast, too, with
her mother day after tomorrow.

(half to himself)

"On the wings of a snow, white dove,
he sends his pure, sweet love...."

109 INT. - AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

109

DIXIE singing.

110 INT. - HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

110

SUE ANNE lying on her bed looking up at the ceiling.

111 INT. - COUNTRY DANCE HALL - NIGHT 111

ROBERT, JAKE AND THE OTHERS setting up for the night's work.

112 INT. - OFFICE - BACKSTAGE - NIGHT 112

HARRY is there. HARRIS MENEFREE comes in.

HARRY

I'm going to have to fire you,
Harris.

HARRIS

Why?

HARRY

Dixie wants you fired. We both
warned you to leave Sue Anne
alone.

HARRIS

O.K. I'll leave her alone.

HARRY

It's too late now. Dixie don't
want you around now.

113 EXT. - FILLING STATION - DAY 113

MAC is replacing wood that has rotted on the side of one of the motels. He is in the process of ripping the rotted wood off, when HARRY drives up. ROSA LEE has a chair in the yard. She is shelling butter beans. HARRY gets out of his car and walks back toward MAC and ROSA LEE. MAC continues his work as HARRY talks to him.

HARRY

Did Sue Anne come here yesterday?

MAC

Yes.

HARRY

What time?

MAC

Around five..Five thirty.

ANGLE - HARRY

HARRY

When she was here did she discuss
any plans with you?

MAC

No.

HARRY

Have you heard from her today?

MAC

No. She was to be here at two, but she didn't show up.

HARRY

She left a note for her Mama this morning at the hotel saying she had eloped. Dixie is wild.

ANGLE - MAC

As he listens, and continues working.

HARRY

She is under heavy sedation. We may have to cancel her show tonight. She's spoiled her rotten you know. I don't know what she expects. Anyway, it's not the end of the world. She's eighteen. Lots of women are married at eighteen. Have children, too. Like I told Dixie, she was married at eighteen. Of course, you know all about that, don't you?

MAC

Yes, I guess I do.

ANGLE - HARRY

HARRY

I'm fond of the kid myself. She's likeable you know. But I can't help feeling marriage might be the best thing for her. It will give her some sense of responsibility. She never had to assume the least bit, you know. Never.

MAC

What is the boy like she's marrying?

HARRY

Boy? He's a man. He's been married three times.

113 CONTD

CONTD 113

ANGLE - MAC

As he listens, and continues working.

HARRY

If she does get in touch with you, tell her for God's sake to call her mother.

MAC

All right. What's the name of the man she's marrying?

HARRY

Menefee. Harris. I'll leave our itinerary here with you.

(He hands it to Mac.

Mac takes it)

Call us collect. Oh, by the way, I felt bad that I spoke so tactlessly about your song the other day. It worried my conscience all the way back to Austin.

MAC

That's all right.

HARRY

You know, I can't promise anything really, but I brought a check by for five hundred dollars and I'll take the song back to Nashville with me and I'll get some of my friends to work out a good, slick arrangement and at least you can hear it done by good solid professionals.

ANGLE - MAC

As he stops his work.

MAC

What's the five hundred dollars for?

HARRY

It's just a gesture of good will. I'm likely not going to be able to do anything with the song, but I thought because of our long association and our friendship

(MORE)

HARRY (contd)
over the years --- that I owed
it to you to try.

MAC
You don't owe me anything. I've
other plans for the song right
now.

HARRY
What?

MAC
I'm just thinking at present.
Nothing definite.

ANGLE - HARRY

HARRY
Well, I'm glad you've got offers.
Want to tell me about them?
I know every angle of this
business.

ANGLE - MAC

MAC
There's no offers. There's just
some young boys starting out
in the business, and they heard
the song. They like it, and they
played it, and now, they want me
to make a record of it with me
singing.

TWO SHOT - HARRY AND MAC

HARRY
Do you have others?

MAC
Yes.

HARRY
Can I see them?

MAC
Nope.

HARRY
Aw, come on, Mac.

113 CONTD

CONTD 113

MAC

No. Goddamn it, Harry. Don't you understand English? I told you I don't want to show them to you.

HARRY

Why?

MAC

Because I don't want to. So stop bugging me.

HARRY

You can't get sore at me for asking.

MAC

Let's change the subject, Harry.

HARRY

Well, if you change your mind, you know where to get me.

HARRY goes to his car and drives away. MAC goes back to his work. ROSA LEE goes into the house with the shelled beans. MAC takes out a slide rule and begins measuring some boards. ROSA LEE comes back out and crosses over to him. He stops working when he sees her and wipes the sweat off of his face.

114 EXT. - MOTEL - DAY

114

TWO SHOT - MAC AND ROSA LEE

MAC

You were sixteen when you got married?

ROSA LEE

Yes.

ANGLE - MAC

MAC

Sue Anne has money, you know. Dixie started a fund for her out of the royalties she got singing the songs I wrote. That makes me feel better knowing she has some to do on. And Dixie was eighteen when I married her

(MORE)

MAC (contd)

and I was seventeen when I married the first time.

ROSA LEE

You never told me you were married before Dixie.

MAC

No? I thought I'd told you everything about me.

ROSA LEE

You never told me that.

MAC

I was trying to get started in the business. I was singing in any honky tonk or bar that would let me through the door.

ANGLE - ROSA LEE

As she listens.

MAC

I wandered from town to town-- from city to city, looking for places to sing, finding any kind of work I could in the day to keep me alive so I could sing and play at night. Finally, Lois, that was my first wife's name, couldn't stand it. She went home.

ANGLE - MAC

MAC

I went back six months later looking for her, and I found her, and she was living with another man, and she said she wanted a divorce so I gave it to her. I swore I'd never marry again. Then I met Dixie, and I changed my mind. I was making a few records by then, and she was singing when I met her, and she said she would give it up as soon as she married, but then she recorded a song of mine, and

(MORE)

MAC (contd)

she done well with it, and she said she wanted to sing for five years and get it out of her system. That never happened.

(repeating the words of the song to himself)

"On the wings of a snow, white dove -- He sends his pure, sweet love. A sign from above. On the wings of a dove."

He goes over to her and kisses her.

MAC

I'm glad you married me. I would have been nothing if you hadn't married me when you did.

ROSA LEE

Oh, go on...

MAC

I didn't have any fight left in me.

ROSA LEE

Oh, sure you did.

MAC

No, I didn't, but I'm beginning to breathe again now. I'm beginning to breathe again.

115 EXT. - MOTEL - DAY

115

ANGLE WIDENS

As the school bus pulls up. SONNY gets off the bus.

MAC

I'm going to call those boys and tell them I'm going to make that record with them.

He goes inside.

CLOSE SHOT - SONNY AND ROSA LEE

SONNY goes to the soft drink machine and gets a drink. He opens it.

115 CONTD

CONTD 115

ROSA LEE

How was school?

SONNY

Pretty fair.

THE ANGLE WIDENS

As MAC comes out. He sits down beside them.

MAC

Want to play some catch, Sonny?

SONNY

Sure.

MAC

The last one in the house is a
jackass.

He starts to run for the house, SONNY runs laughing, after him. They go in the front slamming the screen door after them.

116 INT. - HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

116

MAC runs into the house; SONNY right after him. They are both laughing. There are two gloves and a ball in the corner of the room. They each get a glove, and SONNY picks up the ball and starts tossing it up in the air.

SONNY

(laughing)

You cheated.

MAC

I did not.

SONNY

You did too. You gave yourself
a headstart.

MAC

All right. This time I'll give
you a headstart..One-two-three—
Go..

SONNY takes off. MAC behind him. Again they are laughing as they run out into the yard.

117 EXT. - YARD - DAY

117

ROSA : they run out of the house to her.

SONNY

Now I beat you.

MAC

You sure did.

SONNY

Did you let me beat you?

MAC

I did not.

He goes running out into the field holding his glove up. SONNY throws him the ball. He throws it back. The phone rings..ROSA LEE goes inside. MAC and SONNY continue playing catch.

SONNY

I wish I could sing. How did you learn to sing, Mac?

MAC

I don't know.

SONNY

Did somebody teach you, or did you learn yourself?

MAC

I learned myself.

SONNY

Will you teach me to play the guitar someday?

MAC

Sure.

ROSA LEE comes out.

ROSA LEE

(calling)

That was Sue Anne..

(Mac stops playing.

He walks toward her)

She said to tell you she was married and on her way to Mexico for her honeymoon. She said she would bring her husband by to meet us when they returned.

MAC has come up to her.

117 CONTD

CONTD 117

MAC
Did she say when that would be?

ROSA LEE
No.

118 INT. - HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

118

ROSA LEE, MAC and SONNY are there. MAC is teaching SONNY how to play the guitar.

119 INT. - DIXIE'S HOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT

119

She is there. HARRY enters.

DIXIE
Did you find Mac?

HARRY
Yes.

DIXIE
Did he hear from her?

HARRY
No.

DIXIE
Do you think he's telling the truth?

HARRY
I think so. He said he'd be in touch with us if he heard anything.

DIXIE
Has anybody in the orchestra heard from them?

HARRY
No.

DIXIE
Do you know if he has any money?

HARRY
I doubt it. He spent every cent he made.

DIXIE
Thank God, I've got it fixed so she can't touch her trust fund
(MORE)

DIXIE (contd)
without my permission. I give
the marriage a week. How long
do you give it?

HARRY
I don't know, Dixie.

DIXIE
Well, don't you at least have
an opinion?

HARRY
Not about that.

DIXIE
You know what has just come to me?

HARRY
What?

DIXIE
Mac is lying to you.

HARRY
Why would he lie to me?

DIXIE
To spite me. I bet he knows
where she is and just won't
tell us out of spite. He's
getting back at me because I
wouldn't sing his old no good
song. Do you have Mac's
telephone number?

HARRY
Yes.

DIXIE
Give it to me.

HARRY
What do you want it for?

DIXIE
I'm going to call him up and
tell him I'm no fool, and I
know what he's up to.

HARRY
Aw, come on, Dixie. Be reasonable.

119 CONTD

CONTD 119

DIXIE

Be reasonable. You be reasonable.
 He's heard about her trust fund.
 He's trying to get at it. I'm
 going to tell him in plain
 English, that there is no trust
 fund now that she's married,
 because I'm going to stop it.
 Give me the telephone number.

HARRY

I wish you wouldn't.

DIXIE

I said give it to me, Goddamn it.
 (He hands it to her,
 she dials)
 Hello, Mac Sledge. This is Dixie,
 Dixie Scott. I know what you are
 up to.

120 INT. - MAC AND ROSA LEE'S HOUSE - NIGHT 120

MAC listening to DIXIE on the phone.

DIXIE (V.O.)

And I just want you to know as of
 now Sue Anne has no trust fund.

121 INT. - HOTEL BEDROOM - NIGHT 121

DIXIE is at the phone.

DIXIE

I'm stopping it. I gave it to
 her and I can take it away. She
 is not going to have a cent.

(a pause)

The Sonevabitch hung up on me.

122 INT. - SONNY'S BEDROOM - DAY 122

SONNY is there getting dressed in his best clothes.
 ROSA LEE is there helping him.

123 EXT. - MOTEL - DAY 123

MAC is there in the pickup truck. He is dressed in a
 suit. He blows the horn.

124 INT. - CHURCH - DAY 124

A group of people are seated in the front pews. SONNY

124 CONTD

CONTD 124

and MAC among them. The PREACHER is baptizing a WOMAN, when he finishes, it is SONNY's turn. When SONNY has been baptized, it is MAC's turn. ROSA LEE is in the choir watching, as the choir sings, "Jesus-Pilot of My soul."

125 EXT. - DANCE HALL - SAN MARCOS - NIGHT

125

There are a number of cars and pickup trucks parked outside. MAC, ROSA LEE and SONNY drive up in their pickup truck. We can hear dance music from inside the hall. MAC, ROSA LEE and SONNY get out of their truck and start toward the hall. They are dressed in their Sunday clothes.

126 INT. - DANCE HALL - NIGHT

126

There are twenty couples dancing and as many more sitting around tables listening to music, watching the dancers, eatin, drinking and talking.

The atmosphere is very genteel and middle-class, not at all honky-tonk. There are parties and couples here from nearby colleges, young men and women from town, wives and husbands with their children. They love listening and dancing to the music and they go to these dances often and are having a good time tonight.

ROSA LEE, SONNY and MAC enter, MAC sees an empty table and he starts for it. ROSA LEE and SONNY follow after him. The music stops and the couples leave the dance floor and go to their tables or to the bar for more drinks and food.

ANGLE - ROBERT, BERTIE, JAKE, HENRY AND STEVE

As they rest beside their instruments. ROBERT sees MAC. ROBERT starts across the hall to MAC's table.

ROBERT

Welcome!

MAC

Thank you.

He goes to MAC and they shake hands.

ROBERT

You ready to go to work?

MAC

Yes, I am.

ROBERT

Do you mind if I say a few words
first to introduce you?

MAC

No.

They get up. They start towards the bandstand.

ANGLE - MAC AND ROBERT

As they walk towards the bandstand.

ANGLE - HENRY, JAKE AND BERTIE

As they watch them approach. They go to greet MAC and they all shake hands. Then the musicians go to their chairs and pick up their instruments. ROBERT goes to the edge of the bandstand, taking a microphone with him. MAC sits at the edge of the bandstand.

ROBERT

Friends, we have a little surprise
for you tonight. Mac Sledge is
here with us and he has agreed
to sing one of his songs.

ROBERT's introduction of MAC should be very informal
and low-keyed.

ANGLE - BAND

As ROBERT walks over to his instrument, takes it up
and the band begins to play its introduction.

ANGLE - MAC

As he gets up and goes to the microphone. He begins
to sing.

ANGLE - SONNY AND ROSA LEE

As they listen to MAC.

ANGLE - SONNY

As he looks around at the other people listening to MAC
sing.

ANGLE - MAC

As he sings.

ANGLE - BAND

As they play.

ANGLE - MAC

As he sings.

126 CONTD

CONTD 126

ANGLE - CROWD

As they listen.

ANGLE - SONNY

As he punches ROSA LEE and smiles.

ANGLE - MAC

As he comes to the finish of his song. There is applause. He takes a bow. ROBERT goes up to him. They shake hands. The applause continues. The applause is warm and friendly, but nothing out of the way. Some of the people are aware of MAC's past accomplishments, and they have spread the word so there is an air of curiosity about him now from everyone. MAC gives a wave to the crowd and then starts across the hall to ROSA LEE and SONNY.

ANGLE - ROBERT

As he goes back to his instrument and the band begins to play their regular program of music.

ANGLE - MAC

127 As he walks towards ROSA LEE and SONNY. 127
Just before reaching the table ARABELLA, ANITA and
CORRINE, the wives of JAKE, BERTIE and HENRY surround
him.

ARABELLA

Oh, Mr. Sledge. Excuse us. We
just had to tell you how much
we liked your singing.

MAC

Thank you.

ARABELLA

I'm Arabella Jackson. I'm married
to Jake. And this is Henry's
wife, Corrine, and Bertie's wife,
Anita.

MAC

Pleased to know you. This is my
wife, Rosa Lee and my son, Sonny.

ARABELLA

Heh.

(MORE)

127 CONTD

CONTD 127

ANITA (contd)

(Anita and Corrine smile
and nod greetings)

We just want to personally thank
you for all you've done for the
boys.

ANITA

You've given them a new lease
on life. They were getting real
discouraged.

CORRINE

Henry was about to give up the
whole thing.

ARABELLA

We all know the record is going
to do so well. We just feel
it's the break they need, and
we're all so grateful to you for
all you've done.

MAC

I haven't done much. I hope
we sell a few records ...

ARABELLA

Oh, I just know it will.

ANITA

We're all counting on it. All
my friends say they will buy one.

ARABELLA

Well, it was certainly nice to
meet you folks.

MAC

Thank you.

CORRINE

It certainly was.

ANITA

A real privilege.

128 They smile at them again and start back to their
table. MAC joins ROSA LEE and SONNY. SONNY is
grinning with obvious pride.

128

ROSA LEE

That was just beautiful, Mac

MAC
Thank you. I was nervous.

ROSA LEE
Were you?

MAC
Oh, yes.

ROSA LEE
You certainly couldn't tell it,
could you, Sonny?

SONNY
No, Ma'm.

MAC
That's good. And it sounded all
right?

ROSA LEE
I thought it was wonderful.

SONNY
I liked it too.

Couples are going to the floor to dance. MAC watches
them.

MAC
Do you mind if your Mama and I
dance?

SONNY
No, sir.

MAC and ROSA LEE get up and begin to dance.

ANGLE - SONNY

As he watches them dancing. The music changes back
to a two step.

129 THE ANGLE WIDENS

129

As a BOY, Sonny's age, comes over to SONNY.

BOY
That your Daddy?

SONNY
No, my step-daddy.

BOY

My Mama says he was a famous singer.

SONNY

I guess so. Is that your Mama over there?

BOY

Yes.

SONNY

Is that your Daddy with her?

BOY

Nope. That's a friend of hers. My Mamma and Daddy are divorced. Were your Mother and Daddy divorced.

SONNY

No. He died. In Vietnam.

BOY

Did he get shot?

SONNY

I guess so.

BOY

Don't you know?

SONNY

No. I don't know how he died.

BOY

Didn't you ever ask?

SONNY

No.

The BOY'S MOTHER and HER FRIEND pass by the table on their way to the dance floor. They both have been drinking heavily and are unsteady on their feet as they try to dance.

ANGLE - SONNY AND THE BOY

As they watch the drunken couple.

BOY

I hope that guy is never my step-daddy.

SONNY

Why? Don't you like him?

BOY

No. Do you like your step-daddy?

SONNY

Yes, I do.

BOY

Better than your own Daddy?

SONNY

I never knew my own Daddy.

BOY

I know mine. He's not so much either.

SONNY'S P.O.V.

As he watches ROSA LEE and MAC as they dance near his table. They smile and wave to him.

BACK TO SONNY AT HIS TABLE

He smiles and waves to them.

ANGLE - MAC AND ROSA LEE

As they continue dancing.

THE BAND starts a fast piece and ROSA LEE and MAC dance in tempo as SONNY watches admiringly.

130 INT. - ROSA LEE AND MAC'S HOUSE - DAY

130

ROSA LEE is there working. There is a knock on the door and she looks around to see SUE ANNE.

ROSA LEE

Come in.

SUE ANNE comes into the room.

SUE ANNE

Is my daddy here?

ROSA LEE

No, he's in town. He'll be back in a little.

SUE ANNE

I wonder if you could cash a check for me?

ROSA LEE

How much?

SUE ANNE

A hundred dollars.

ROSA LEE

Oh, I don't think I have that much.

SUE ANNE

The check is good.

ROSA LEE

I'm sure of that. I just don't have that much here in the cash drawer.

(She goes to the cash register and opens it)

All I have is twenty-five dollars.

SUE ANNE

That will help.

She writes a check and gives it to her.

ROSA LEE

How was Mexico?

SUE ANNE

It was all right.

ROSA LEE

Did you just get back?

SUE ANNE

No. We've been here a couple of days.

ROSA LEE

Will you stay around here?

SUE ANNE

We may stay. We may move on. My husband has to find work. My Mama stopped my trust fund out of spite. We met some musicians in Austin the other night that said my Daddy just mad

ROSA LEE

He did.

SUE ANNE

How did it go?

ROSA LEE

I think pretty well. He seemed pleased.

SUE ANNE

Are you a singer, too?

ROSA LEE

No.

SUE ANNE

That article in the paper on Daddy said you were.

ROSA LEE

Well, they got that wrong. All I do is sing in the choir at church.

SUE ANNE

I thought about being a singer. But I don't think I've got any voice, to tell you the truth. I just think I was going on about singing to devil Mama. Daddy's quit drinking they tell me.

ROSA LEE

Yes, he has.

SUE ANNE

How did he do it?

ROSA LEE

I know know. He just quit.

SUE ANNE

Did you ask him to quit?

ROSA LEE

No. He was working here and I told him he couldn't drink while he worked. At first he used to go off sometimes at night and load up, but he was always sober when it was time next morning to start work and then gradually he stopped even that.

(MORE)

130 CONTD

CONTD 130

ROSA LEE (contd)

Do you have a place to stay
tonight?

SUE ANNE

Yes. We're staying at the Jeff
Davis Hotel in Austin.

ROSA LEE

If you need a place to stay
tomorrow night. You're welcome
here.

SUE

Thank you.
(she goes)

131 EXT. - MOTEL - DAY

131

SUE ANNE comes out. HARRIS is asleep in the car,
drunk. She gets in. She drives off. ROSA LEE comes
outside. She watches the car drive away.

132 EXT. - JEFF DAVIS HOTEL - AUSTIN - DAY

132

MAC drives up in his truck.

133 INT. - LOBBY - JEFF DAVIS HOTEL - AUSTIN - DAY

133

MAC enters and goes to the CLERK.

MAC

Menefee.

THE CLERK goes to the register.

CLERK

First name?

MAC

Harris.

CLERK

Oh, they're gone.

MAC

Leave any forwarding address?

CLERK

No, sir. Do you know them?

MAC

Mr. Menefee is my daughter.

133 CONTD

CONTD 133

CLERK

They slipped out. They owe us a bill for a hundred dollars.

MAC

I'll play it.

The CLERK goes to get the bill.

134 A SERIES OF SHOTS:

134

A. MAC ENTERING LOBBY OF AUSTIN MOTEL

MAC

(to clerk)

Do you have a Menefee registered here?

CLERK

No, sir.

B. MAC ENTERING THE LOBBY OF ANOTHER AUSTIN MOTEL

C. MAC KNOCKING ON THE DOOR OF A SEEDY AUSTIN ROOMING HOUSE. A WOMAN OPENS THE DOOR.

MAC

I'm looking for a couple named Menefee.

The WOMAN shakes her head, "No," and closes the door.

D. INT. - AUSTIN BAR - MAC ENTERS AND GOES TO THE BARTENDER

MAC

I'm looking for a musician named Menefee. Harris Menefee. I hear he comes in here.

BARTENDER

He did. I haven't seen him in the last couple of days. He couldn't find work around here and he told me he was moving on.

135 EXT. - LOUISIANA HIGHWAY - NIGHT

135

SUE ANNE and HARRIS are in her car. HARRIS is driving. They are going very fast.

136 EXT. - HIGHWAY LEADING TO MOTEL - NIGHT

136

MAC is in his truck driving home.

137 EXT. - LOUSIANA HIGHWAY - NIGHT 137
SUE ANNE's car speeds down the highway.

138 EXT. - FILLING STATION - NEXT MORNING 138
ROBERT, JAKE, HENRY and BERTIE drive up in their truck. They get out of the truck as MAC and ROSA LEE come out of the house. ROBERT has a record in his hand.

ROBERT

Here it is.
(He hands it to MAC)

HENRY

We just heard it and we're very pleased and so is the record company.

BERTIE

They think it's going to do very well.

HENRY

Even Jake is pleased and not much pleases Jake.

MAC

Well, I'm glad you boys are pleased.

ROSA LEE

We'll have to get us a record player so we can hear it.

ROBERT

You don't have a record player?

ROSA LEE

No. We just have the t.v. and the radio.

ROBERT

Well, you all come over to my place right now and I'll play it for you.

MAC

All right.

ROSA LEE

I sure would like to hear it.

ROBERT and the others get in their truck. He turns the radio on.

ROBERT

Better start listening to the radio, too. The company thinks it should be getting some play soon on the radio. See you later.

They drive on.

ROSA LEE

Are you excited, Mac?

MAC

Yes, I guess I am.

ROSA LEE

I'm so excited. I can hardly stand it.

MAC

You get in the truck. I'll close up.

She goes to the truck. He starts for the house as the phone rings. She turns the radio on in the truck and begins to turn the dial obviously hoping she can find her husband's song. MAC comes out. He goes to the truck. He turns the music off.

MAC

That was Harry Silver. He said they got a wire this morning that Sue Anne was killed last night in an automobile accident somewhere in Northern Louisiana. I couldn't catch the name of the town.

139 EXT. - HIGHWAY - SAME DAY - THE ROAD TO DALLAS - FORTWORTH AIRPORT 139

MAC and ROSA LEE are in the pick-up truck driving down the highway.

140 EXT. - NASHVILLE AIRPORT - MORNING 140

MAC's plane has landed. We see him leaving the plane.

141 EXT. - NASHVILLE - MORNING 141

MAC in a taxi riding through the streets.

142 EXT. - DIXIE SCOTT'S NASHVILLE HOUSE - DAY 142

The taxi stops in front of the house. MAC gets out with his suitcase. He pays the DRIVER. There are

142 CONTD

CONTD 142

several groups of friends in the yard of the house. They watch as MAC approaches. Some of them know him and go to greet him.

1ST MAN

You have my sympathy, Mac.

MAC

Thank you.

SECOND MAN

Mine, too, Mac. It is a terrible, terrible thing.

He takes MAC'S suitcase and starts for the house.

143 INT. - DIXIE'S HOUSE - DAY

143

It is a mansion, furnished expensively but with no taste. MAC enters followed by the second man with his suitcase. They come into the foyer from which they can see the living room and music room. There are pictures of DIXIE and her awards all around. HARRY SILVER is in the music room talking in hushed tones to a group of people. He sees MAC and goes to greet him.

HARRY

I'm glad you came. It's very sad.

MAC

Yes, it is.

HARRY

We're all worried about Dixie. She's in bed. Heavily sedated.

MAC

What about Sue Anne's husband?

HARRY

He's going to live. He's in the hospital. It was all his fault. He was drunk.

144 INT. - LIVING ROOM - DAY

144

A closed casket surrounded by flowers is in the living room. HARRY takes MAC into the room and over to the casket.

144 CONTD

CONTD 144

HARRY

Dixie wanted a closed casket. I thought it would be easier on her and everybody if the body was left in the funeral parlor, but she insisted it be brought back home. Dixie was glad when I told her you were coming. The minute we heard about Sue Anne's death, she asked me to get word to you. She told me to take you up to Sue Anne's room, so you could pick out something that belonged to her, to remember her by.

(He looks at his watch)

We don't have a whole lot of time. Come on. I'll take you up to Sue Anne's room.

(He starts out. Mac follows)

145 INT. - HALL DAY 145

HARRY enters. MAC following.

146 INT. - STAIRS - DAY 146

HARRY goes up the stairs, MAC following.

147 INT. - UPSTAIRS HALL - DAY 147

HARRY enters; MAC follows.
At the center of the hall is a closed door.

HARRY

(whispering)

Dixie is in there. Would you like to speak to her?

MAC

If she wants to see me.

HARRY

Let me go in and see how she's feeling.

(He points to a door
at the end of the
hall)

That's Sue Anne's room in there.

He goes into DIXIE's room, closing the door behind him after he enters. MAC continues down the hall toward SUE ANNE's room.

148 INT. - SUE ANNE'S ROOM - DAY

148

She hasn't spent much time here, and there is nothing much in the room that belonged to her or had any meaning for her. MAC enters. He looks around the room. There are a few pictures on the wall of DIXIE, and one of DIXIE and HARRY. He sees a closet door. He opens it. There are a few of the girl's clothes here, mostly dresses she has outgrown. He closes the closet door. He goes to a bureau. There is a perfume atomizer, a silver brush and comb set, a jewelry box. It's empty. HARRY comes in.

HARRY

Dixie will see you. Is there anything here you want?

(Harry begins to open drawers. They are empty or half empty.

There is nothing personal in them)

There is not much here, is there? I don't know what Dixie thought would be here. Sue Anne was never home. Maybe Christmas or Thanksgiving once in a while. I can't even remember the last time she was here.

MAC

I don't have any picture of Sue Anne.

HARRY

Oh, I'll send you one.

They start out of the room.

149 INT. - DIXIE'S BEDROOM - THE SHADES DRAWN IN THE ROOM

149

DIXIE in a dressing gown is on the bed. A NURSE is seated at either side of the bed. MAC and HARRY enter. HARRY goes over to the bed.

HARRY

Dixie?

(She looks up at him)

Mac is here to say hello to you.

DIXIE

Where is he?

HARRY

Here he is.

(MORE)

HARRY (contd)

(He beckons Mac)

Mac, come say hello to Dixie.
She wants to see you.

MAC goes over to the bed.

ANGLE - DIXIE

DIXIE

Why has God done this to me, Mac?
Why has God done this to me? Oh,
Jesus!

(She's crying now)

Sweet Jesus. I tried every way
in the world I could to stop
her. I said Sue Anne listen
to your Mama about this. Harry
can tell you. I begged. I
pleaded. Why did she treat me
this way, Mac? Why? Why? I
gave her everything in this
world she ever wanted. I had
nothing when I was her age and
she had everything that money
could buy.

HARRY

Sh, Sh. Now, Dixie. It's not
good for you to get excited.

DIXIE

I'll tell you one thing. That
Sonevabitch she married will
not end up with her trust fund.
I want you to call my lawyer
about that, Harry. I don't
want that Sonevabitch to have
a nickel of that money.

(She falls back on
the bed)

Oh, Jesus! Oh, Jesus! My little
girl.

(She tries to get out
of the bed)

Help me up. Somebody help me up.
I want to see her. I brought her
home to be with me one last time,
and I want to see my little girl.

One of the NURSES moves close to her and takes her arm.

NURSE

Sh. Sh ... Now, now.

DIXIE

Let go of me you Sonevabitch! Let go of me!

(She jerks free and tries to get out of the bed, and then falls back)

Oh, I can't go. I ain't strong enough. I can't make it. Forgive me. Forgive me for being weak. Forgive me.

(She falls back on the bed. She passes out)

HARRY

(turns to Mac)

Come on. We'd better get downstairs. She'll be all right.

They leave.

150 INT. - LIVING ROOM - DAY

150

There are a few friends in the room. MAC and HARRY enter. Some of the people come over to MAC and shake his hand. HARRY looks at his watch as the UNDERTAKER and his ATTENDANTS come in.

HARRY

It's time to leave for the church.

(Mac and Harry step aside as the undertaker has the casket taken out of the room)

You'll ride to the church with me.

He and MAC start out of the room.

151 INT. - HARRY'S CAR - DAY

151

HARRY and MAC are alone in the car.

HARRY

Dixie thought to the last she would make it to the church service, but the doctor won't permit it. She's been under a terrible strain. I guess Nashville has changed a lot since you were here last?

MAC

I guess so.

HARRY

Maybe this afternoon I can ride
you around.

(a pause)

Did you bring any of your songs
with you?

MAC

No.

HARRY

Did you make your recording?

MAC

Yes.

HARRY

How did it go?

MAC

All right.

HARRY

Has it been released?

MAC

Yes.

HARRY

What is the name of the company
again?

MAC

Aztec.

HARRY takes out a pen and notepad and writes the
information down.

152 INT. - CHURCH - DAY

152

The church is half-filled with friends. The casket
is at the altar surrounded by many expensive funeral
arrangements. An organ plays hymns. HARRY and MAC
enter the church and an USHER takes them down the
aisle to seats saved for them.

153 EXT. - GRAVESITE - DAY

153

The coffin is here covered with floral arrangements.
There are twenty friends at the graveside. A PREACHER
holding a Bible, is near the casket

153 CONTD

CONTD 153

ANGLE - MAC

As he waits at the graveside.

ANGLE - HARRY

At the edge of the crowd whispering to a FRIEND.

ANGLE - MAC

As he waits. HARRY comes up to him.

HARRY

(whispering)

We're going to have to wait for
Dixie. She just sent me word
that she insists on being at the
burial.

ANGLE - PREACHER - WAITING

HARRY goes up to the PREACHER and whispers something
inaudibly to him.

ANGLE - MAC

HARRY comes back to MAC.

HARRY

(whispering)

I thought he should know about
the delay.

(Harry looks towards
the entrance to the
graveyard)

Excuse me.

He walks away from MAC toward the entrance. MAC turns
and watches as he walks away.

MAC'S P.O.V.

He sees DIXIE, dressed in deep mourning, enter the
graveyard supported by TWO ATTENDANTS. He sees HARRY
go up to them and he watches as they walk slowly towards
the grave and casket.

ANGLE - DIXIE AND HARRY

As she sees MAC.

DIXIE

Is that Mac, Harry?

HARRY

Yes, Honey ...

DIXIE

Tell him to come here to me. I want him to know that I forgive him. In front of my baby's grave I want him to know I forgive him for everything he ever done to me.

(calling)

Mac ... I forgive you, because my little baby girl would want me to.

HARRY

All right, Honey ... Now, sh ... sh ...

DIXIE

Where are we ... in church?

HARRY

No, baby girl. We're at the cemetery. Now, let's be quiet, so we can listen to the Preacher.

DIXIE

I'm a miserable sinner, Harry ...

HARRY

We all are, Honey. Now, sh ... sh ... Listen to the Preacher.

154 BACK TO MAC AT GRAVESIDE

154

The PEOPLE near him make room for DIXIE, HARRY and the ATTENDANTS as they come to the graveside. When they have positioned themselves near the casket, HARRY nods discreetly to the Preacher, who, opens his Bible and reads ...

PREACHER

(reading)

"I am the resurrection and the life and he that believeth in me shall never see death but have life everlasting."

The PREACHER nods to casket ATTENDANTS and they begin to lower the casket. DIXIE screams and faints. EVERYONE turns to her.

154 CONTD

CONTD 154

ANGLE - DIXIE - HARRY AND THE ATTENDANTS

FRIENDS surround them as they try to revive DIXIE.

ANGLE - MAC

He stands alone by the graveside, watching the lowering of the casket.

155 EXT. - HOUSE AND FILLING STATION - DAY

155

ROBERT drives up in his pick-up truck. MAC comes out of the house. ROBERT gets out of the truck.

ROBERT

I was very sorry to hear about your daughter.

MAC

I appreciate it.

MAC starts to fill up the car.

ROBERT

I can do that.

(He gets the gas pump and puts it in the tank of the car)

Did Rosa Lee tell you about our record?

MAC

No.

ROBERT

It's doing pretty well. In Texas that is.

ANGLE - MAC

As he listens.

ROBERT (contd)

The Texas stations are giving it a big play, of course, nothing has happened to it yet nationally but I am very encouraged by it's popularity here, and I think because of that there will be a good chance of it's making the National Charts in time. Don't you?

MAC

I guess so. I wouldn't know
what happens down there.

ROBERT

Have you heard it played on the
radio?

MAC

No.

ROBERT

They play it all the time.

He goes to the truck and turns the radio on.

THE ANGLE WIDENS

ROSA LEE comes around the side of the house. ROBERT
turns the radio dial until he finds a station playing
the song.

ROBERT

Here we are.

(He listens to the
song and is obviously
pleased and turns around
to see Mac's reaction.
He notices Rosa Lee then)

Hi, Rosa Lee.

ROSA LEE

Hi.

ROBERT

How does it sound to you, Mac?

MAC

O.K.

The song ends. Robert begins to turn the dial.

ROBERT

I bet I can find it again. I
heard it on three different
stations driving over here.

(Robert glances up at
Mac and then at Rosa
Lee)

I'm sorry. I shouldn't be talking
about things like this now. I
hope you'll forgive me, Mac.
It's just that I was anxious to
share our good news with you.

MAC
I appreciate it.

MAC starts around the back. ROBERT stands self-consciously watching as he disappears. ROBERT turns to ROSA LEE.

ROBERT
Here's the money I owe you for my gas. It was seven gallons.

ROSA LEE
Thanks.

ROSA LEE takes the money.

ROBERT
Tell him I'll see him towards the end of the week. We have dates to play in East Texas tomorrow and the next day.

ROBERT gets in the truck.

ROBERT
I'll call him when I get back.

He drives off. ROSA LEE goes around back to MAC. He goes to her.

MAC
I don't trust happiness. I think things are going all right, and then something like this happens and tears everything apart and breaks your heart.

In the distance we hear the school bus. She looks up and sees the school bus drive up the road and stop as SONNY gets off. She walks around the house to him.

SONNY
Where is Mac?

ROSA LEE
He's out back. He bought you a football. It's in your room.

SONNY goes into the house. She follows him in.

She turns on a radio. The station plays MAC's record. She goes to a back window and looks out.

156 CONTD

CONTD 156

ROSA LEE'S P.O.V.

She can see MAC working in his garden.

BACK TO ROSA LEE AT THE WINDOW

She is about to call MAC to come and listen to the record but doesn't. She turns away from the window and turns the radio off, as SONNY comes out with his football.

ROSA LEE

If you go out to see Mac, don't dog him. He needs to be quiet.

He starts out of the room and then pauses.

TWO SHOT - SONNY AND ROSA LEE

ANGLE - SONNY

SONNY

Mama, the other night when we were over at that dance place, a boy asked me how my Daddy died in Vietnam. And I didn't know. I just knew he was killed. How was he killed, Mama?

ANGLE - ROSA LEE

ROSA LEE

I don't know, Honey.

SONNY

Was he killed in battle?

ROSA LEE

I don't know, Sonny.

ANGLE - SONNY

SONNY

Didn't you ever ask anybody?

ROSA LEE

Yes. And no one could tell me anything except he was found dead. He was alone when they found him and they didn't know how long he had been there. And

(MORE)

ROSA LEE (contd)
 so they couldn't be sure he was
 killed in a battle or if he was,
 what battle, since there had
 been three in that area that
 week, they said, and he could
 have been in any one of them.
 Or he could have just been out
 walking, they said, and a sniper
 got him. Where would he be
 walking to, I asked, and they
 said they had no more idea than
 I had.

(a pause)
 He was only a boy.

ANGLE - SONNY

As he listens.

ROSA LEE (contd)
 He was a good boy and I think
 he was going to make a fine man
 and you would have been proud of
 him, and he would have been
 proud of you.

157 EXT. - BACK YARD - GARDEN - DAY

157

MAC is working in the garden. SONNY comes out the
 back door of the house with the football.

SONNY
 Thanks for the football, Mac.

MAC
 That's all right.

SONNY kicks the football high in the air and then runs
 towards it, trying to catch it, before it falls back
 to the earth. He just misses it, but tries again,
 kicking it higher this time.

ANGLE - MAC

MAC
 (singing quietly
 to himself)
 "On the wings of a snow white dove
 He sends his pure, sweet love
 A sign from above
 On the wings of a dove ... "

157 CONTD

CONTD 157

THE ANGLE WIDENS

As he looks over at SONNY as the boy continues to play ball by himself. MAC puts his hoe down. He walks toward the boy.

MAC

Sonny ...

SONNY looks up at him.

MAC (contd)

Throw me a pass ...

SONNY does so. MAC runs for it, catching it.

MAC (contd)

Now, you run for this.

SONNY runs across the yard as MAC throws the football and SONNY catches it laughing with delight. ROSA LEE comes around the side of the house. She sees them and stands watching. SONNY passes the ball to MAC who kicks it then high in the air as SONNY runs for it. ROSA LEE watches.

ROSA LEE

(singing to herself)

"On the wings of a snow white
dove, He sends his pure, sweet
love. A sign from above.
On the wings of a dove."

MAC and SONNY continue playing football. ROSA LEE watches as overhead, high above, geese can be seen flying on their way to the gulf.

FADE OUT