Hud

By Irving Ravetch
- Thanks for the lift.
- Where will you look?
I don't know, but if I find a pink Cadillac, he'll be around somewhere.
So long.
- Who's that?
- It's Lon.
I'm making chilli, but if you want breakfast I'll come out.
No, thanks. You seen my uncle Hud?
I chicken-fried him a steak last night about seven. Haven't seen him since.
All right.
Daisy, I'm taking two doughnuts.
OK, honey, just leave a dime on the counter.
All right.
It's 26 after 6 on a Thursday, it's on the Bobby Don Brewer Show.
Must have had quite a brawl in here.
I had Hud in here last night is what I had. Sure looks it.
Mr Larker.
- Hey there, Mr Larker!
- Hey there, Lon!
- You gonna rodeo this year?
- I ain't looking to get stepped on.
- Why're you in town this early?
- Trying to run down Hud.
Didn't I see his big Cadillac parked down the street?
Pretty sure I did.
I wouldn't disturb him if I was you.
I ain't dying to, but I've been told to get him.
Hud?
Hud!
Honcho, I just hope for your sake that this house is on fire.
I'm sorry, but we got trouble at the ranch.
You got trouble right here.
I was getting nicely tucked in, you come tiptoeing through the tulips.
Granddad wants you
and he said right now.
He said right now?
Do you think it would be all right with
my daddy if I buttoned up my shirt?
Oh, come on, will you?
You got me out of the wrong side of bed
this morning. Don't snap at my heels.
I'm liable to turn around and bite you.
Thank you, honey.
Hey, hi, Joe.
Which one of you two's coming out
of my house at six in the morning?
I asked you a question.
Which one, damn it?
I hate to have to tell you as it's my own
nephew, but it's this snot-nosed kid.
I'll kill that little punk.
Wait a minute!
You got diabetes.
I'll handle this for you.
I can do it myself. Out of my way.
Now, Joe, you can't afford
to get worked up, buddy boy.
I'll lower his temperature some,
I promise you.
All right, hot shot. We're going to finish
this discussion behind the woodshed.
Thanks a whole lot!
Relax, you can charge a stud fee
by the time that story gets around.
If I'm still alive.
I could've gotten hurt back there.
So could I. Ain't it lucky you were handy?
- You should take me along as a regular.
- Pace would kill you, sonny.
What's so important my daddy
has to drag me back on my day off?
- He wants to ask your advice.
- Ask me?
He hasn't asked me
about anything in 15 years.
I just work out there
from the shoulders down myself.
Can you make it all day, after last night? I ain't 100 years old like him. I don't need a week's sleep to be fresh. He can't help being an old man. You sure drive this thing. That'll be Hud. Parked right in my flower bed. - Good morning, Hud. - Morning. I'm sorry to cut into your time off. Lonnie, close that screen door. The house is still standing, you're drinking coffee as usual, why push the panic button? We come up with a dead heifer in the night. You dragged me back here for a dead cow? I'm worried about this one. She wasn't cut or crippled-looking. No swelling. - Any Johnson grass around? - No. This may be something I ought to know about. Jos and Jesse are keeping off the buzzards. Stay out of those berries, they're for the pie. Let's not stand around. I got things to do. Watch that cigarette ash, it's going in the pot. I'll go bring the pick-up around. How come you always run over my zinnias? I've been trying to get them to come up. - Don't plant 'em where I park. - You're cheerful. Missy, your job is to keep house, not worry about my disposition. Frying pan's still on. Want eggs? Or did you have breakfast in bed?
Nope, we hadn't quite
 gotten around to breakfast.
- Morning, boys.
- Mr Bannon.
Pretty hard to keep them birds away.
Had to use a flashlight all night.
Look at them buzzards. They'll be back.
You couldn't scare 'em off with artillery.
I wish you wouldn't do that.
They keep the country clean.
Besides, there's a law
against killing buzzards.
I always say the law was meant to be
interpreted in a lenient manner.
I try to do that. Sometimes I lean
to one side of it, sometimes the other.
I don't like to break the law.
Well, she ain't gonna sit up
and tell us herself.
What do you think, Hud?
I don't know. She looks clean to me.
Something killed her.
I'll call the state vet. He might know.
This is our land.
I don't want government men on it.
Any time, any place. This ain't nothing.
Let the buzzards have her.
No, I don't believe I will.
I'll call the government man
and ask him to take a look.
Bring someone in to tell you how to run
your business, just don't ask my opinion.
I'd like you and Lon
to stay out here for a while.
I'll take these boys back with me
so they can snooze a little.
Lon, you take that water bag
so you won't parch.
Why don't you sit with our sick friend?
I got a healthy one in town
that won't wait.
It's a good thing you showed up.
We blew a tyre
and I gotta get this stuff back.
- Need help, Jesse?
- I'm all right, Hud, thanks.

You think your hand would fall off
if you opened the door?
- Did you pick up my beer?
- Two six-packs. Enough till tomorrow.
- Keeping count on me?
- I keep tripping over those empties.

Somebody smells of Chanel No. 5.
It isn't me. I can't afford it.
You sure weren't riding the range
this afternoon.
- I sure wasn't.
- No.

I wish I knew where some girls
get the time.

By the time I finish scrubbing the floor,
cleaning the bathtub, hanging clothes...
- They just drop everything, honey.
- I suppose it does beat housework.
- Want an orange? I'll peel it for you.
- No, thanks.

Look, it says "Florida" on it.
We grow 'em right here in Texas
and they send them in from Florida.
That makes sense, doesn't it?
Yeah.

The checker at the A and P market
says you're seeing Truman Peters' wife.
Is that what he says?
He says she got a bad temper. Her maid
quit because she hollers so much.
Well, our maid's gonna get canned
'cause she's talking too much.
- You want a Fig Newton?
- No.

Just leave a little something for dinner,
will you?
You still eating bread?
After steak and flour gravy, hominy,
fried okra and onions, and hot rolls?
May have looked a lot,
but it melted away.
- Hud didn't want dinner?
He's prettying up. He'll eat later.
What's for dessert?
You think a freezer-full
of peach ice cream would do?
I've been waiting all winter
for those Alberta peaches.
That's what you've been waiting for?
How about those peachy pin-ups
you hide with your socks?
That's private. Stay out of there.
I'm a girl.
They don't do a thing for me.
I'll dish up the ice cream on the porch.
It's cooler.
That'll be fine, Alma.
Go on, before you wet your didy.
Alma!
Yeah?
Give me a clean white shirt.
You're big with "please"
and "thank you".
Please get off your lazy butt
and get me a clean shirt. Thank you.
- Had trouble getting the lipstick out.
- Let's try yours. It might wash out easier.
- Let's not.
- You ain't getting any younger.
- What are you saving it for?
- Tabs are in the collar.
- Hear the whippoorwill?
- I think there's two of 'em.
I've never seen one of those birds.
All you do is hear 'em calling.
What are you thinking about, Lon?
I don't know. Just looking up
ahead, I guess. To what's coming.
Thinking about your worries
and ambitions?
Yeah, that and having a car
of my own to tear around in. And girls.
I expect you'll get your share of what's
good. A boy like you deserves it.
It's getting late.
My daddy sure looks like
his collar was choking him.
- Those were his Sunday best.
- I don't remember him any.
I do.
You don't carry a picture
of Hud, do you?
No, I don't.
But he's your son,
same as my dad was.
Yep, he is.
- What are you holding against him?
- He knows and you don't need to.
- There you go.
- Thanks.
- Ain't you having any?
- I'm trying to lose a couple of pounds.
I'll do those dishes later.
I've got to get off these feet.
- Kitchen's your department, Alma.
- Seen enough of it for today.
Are you planning on
going back to town tonight?
I didn't get washed up
to sit on the porch.
I'd like you to be back here before
morning. The vet'll be here early.
All right. It's pretty good. Peachy.
You can't get much
air through this nylon.
You ought to wear a sarong,
like in the South Seas.
Oh, yeah, that would be a lot of laughs.
You're half native already.
I've never seen you in shoes.
I wore 'em once.
To get married in. White satin pumps.
I don't have 'em any more.
Or the man, either.
I'm going to get into town.
Alma, you want to blow
some foam off some beer?
No, thanks.
I'm going to get up out of this swing.
Set some biscuits. Go to bed.
I'll settle for half that action.
I'll go with you, Hud.
What you got lined up, sport?
A SnoCone or something?
No, I just thought
I'd catch a ride with you, that's all.
All right, come on, let's make tracks.
- Did you need me, Granddad?
- No, you go on.
Just be careful.
You drive, sport.
- What was that all about?
- I'll tell you someday when I'm drunk.
Gig this thing a little, will you?
- It's a lonesome old night, isn't it?
- Ain't they all?
I love that sound. Goes right through me.
Scares the hell out of the cattle.
- Know what trains make me think of?
- I've a strong feeling you'll tell me.
I guess I just like 'em, that's all.
Keys.
Well, golly!
Look at that Las Vegas saddle.
You couldn't lift that
on a horse with a crane.
- It is pretty noisy.
- Where are you going?
- Just tagging along.
- Not with me.
Go tie on a couple of Dr Pepper's.
I'll see ya.
- Hi, Mr Kirby.
- Hi.
- Read that one?
- Yeah, twice.
- About the best book you ever had.
- Pretty steamy, ain't it?
I don't know. People seem
a lot like the ones I see.
Did you read the part where the
sergeant gets her for the first time?
Yeah, I read that part.
I sure have seen
an awful lot of you for one night.
I'm just headed for the square, is all.
Where're you headed?
Just to keep you up to date,
I'm going to Mrs Ruby Fletcher's house.
I don't think that's a house
you've heard much about.
I've heard some. I am out of my
three-cornered pants, you know.
- I have been for some time.
- How old are you?
A fast seventeen? Boy, when I was...
When I was your age,
I couldn't get enough of anything.
That was the summer you were born.
Your ma died. And your daddy
was feeling a little wild about things.
We bought us a '27 Chevy.
Kept it tied together with bailing wire,
hit every honky-tonk in the country.
I don't know which we run the hardest,
that car or them country girls,
came to them dances.
Boy, we do-se-doed and chased
a lot of girlish butts that summer.
I wouldn't mind going that route myself.
Come on along.
No, I don't think so.
All right.
Hey, wake up. Come on, Lonnie.
Open your eyes.
- You gonna stay here till dinner?
- What do you want?
I want you to get up. I can't stay here
wrassling with you all morning.
- Why not? I like it.
- I bet. That's enough. Now, get up.
- Can't do that, Alma.
- Are you sleeping in the raw again?
There's pyjamas in there.
How come you're not using them?
- They strangle me.
- Come on.
- What do you sleep in?
In my own room, with the door locked.
Ever wear any shorty things?
What kind of question is that?
Just wondering.
Your mind usually run that way?
It seems to.
Boys with impure thoughts get acne.
Did you know that?
That's all bull.
Keep it up. You'll see.
Hurry up!
The vet's coming this morning.
Let's get away from this stink.
I've got all I need here.
I'm going to ask you
to get your cattle together.
All of them.
I'll have to make an inspection.
Inspection for what?
For what killed that heifer.
I hope I'm wrong, but I'm afraid
you've got the worst kind of trouble.
I think that cow died
of foot and mouth disease.
Oh, me. I never thought
it would be anything like that.
Let's have it. What are we in for?
Get your herds together.
We'll take some samples.
Bring in a few calves, some horses,
infect them artificially,
then wait and see what happens.
I'll tell you. They turn up sick,
you kill 'em, right?
If the calves turn up sick and the horses
don't, it's foot and mouth. We've got to.
The last bad outbreak, the government
had to kill 77,000 cattle,
plus that many sheep and goats,
even 20,000 deer.
It's a terrible thing.
I just bought 20 head
of Mexican cows down south.
Could they be the bad ones?
- Could be.
If they were, you'll have to get rid of
every cow that's been near them.
You're talking about
all the animals I own.
I know I am.
I hope I'm wrong
and that it's something else.
So we won't ever have to
talk about it again.
Looks like I landed
in the wrong place again.
You guys get on,
there's some fence to fix.
Man, how about that?
You going to let them shoot your cows
on account of a schoolbook disease?
You getting that old, Homer?
I wonder if a long quarantine wouldn't
satisfy 'em. Think they'd agree to that?
They don't have to agree to nothing.
They're the law.
You can agree with them till hell
freezes over.
But that Mr Burris
seemed like a reasonable man.
Think they'd come and liquidate?
Hell, yeah,
you got what they say you got.
You've had 24 of my 34 years working
for you on this ranch,
and, Daddy,
you've had top-grade cheap labour.
I've shovelled manure for you.
You've got my calluses. For what?
Your blessings the day you die?
No, damn it.
I want out of this spread
what I put into it.
Have you got a proposal, Hud?
Get on the phone and sell every cow you
own. They ain't got a chain on you yet.
That's how you'd get out of a tight?
I can ship the whole herd out
before they begin the test. 
Try and pass bad stuff off on my 
neighbours who wouldn't know? 
You don't know it's bad stuff.
I'll ship 'em up north 
before the news gets out. 
And take a chance on starting 
an epidemic in the entire country? 
This whole country is run on epidemics. 
Where've you been? 
Epidemics of big business price fixing, 
crooked TV shows, 
income-tax finagling, 
souped-up expense accounts.
How many honest men you know? 
Take the sinners from the saints, you're lucky to get Lincoln. 
I say let's put our bread into 
some of that gravy while it is still hot. 
You're an unprincipled man, Hud. 
Don't let that fuss you.
You've got enough for both of us. 
This afternoon's been a regular bitch.
- You out of poop? 
- Just having a breather. 
Go back to the ranch and grab a nap. 
No, I'll hold up my end of it. 
Yeah, I guess you would. 
Granddad. 
I found your longhorns near Idiot Ridge. 
Government's gonna have a hard time 
trying to inspect 'em. 
Those big horns'll never go through a chute. 
There ain't many left, are there? 
No, they're dying out. 
I just keep 'em for old times' sake, 
to remind me of how things was. 
Everything we had come from their 

hides:
our clothes, our hats. 
Granddad, let's turn 'em loose. 
No, Lon, that wouldn't be the thing to do.
They gotta go with the rest.
- Granddad.
- Oh, why, thank you, Lon.
I shouldn't have brought you here
after the day you put in.
If the picture's any good,
I'll wake up, don't you worry.
Looks like you're the only one who ain't
got someone's knee to pinch.
Oh, I think I can stand it.
You wouldn't think they'd pay 65 cents
to come here and do it.
They can go up in the hayloft
for nothing.
Come on, you miners, '49ers,
let's all join in and sing that old favourite,
Clementine.
Just follow the bouncing ball.
You gonna get your mouth around that?
Gonna try.
- Hi, Hud.
- How are you?
- Is that Truman Peters' wife with Hud?
- I think so.
- Want me to call him over?
- No, just leave him.
Got a half a buck?
Hey, come on back.
You gonna give me the change?
Hey, hey,
let's make a party out of this.
This not-too-natural blonde
here is Mrs Truman Peters.
- How do you do?
- How do you do?
Wild Horse Homer Bannon
as he used to be known.
And this gangly youth over there
is my nephew, Lon.
You may have just noticed,
my daddy hasn't asked us to sit down.
He doesn't want to socialise with me.
He's fussy about
the company he keeps.
You're a married woman, Lily. That doesn't go down well with him. He's a man of high principles. Doesn't believe in any loose living at all. Isn't that right? - Granddad.
- Homer, you OK? Get me... Get me home, boy. Roll down that window a little, will you? That's good. Place back there seemed a little short of air. Maybe you just got too much sun today. Well, whatever.
No need to pull such a long face about it. I feel better now.
When we get home, I'm going to fix you some Sal Hepatica. Yeah, that'll settle me right down. He dropped right off. He's beginning to look kind of worn out, isn't he? Sometimes I forget how old he is.
- Guess I just don't want to think about it.
- It's time you started. I know he's gonna die some day. I know that much. He is. Makes me feel like somebody dumped me into a cold river. Happens to everybody: Horses, dogs, men. Nobody gets out of life alive.
- I'll give you a hand upstairs.
- Lon'll take care of me. Suit yourself.
Goodnight, Hud. Thanks for the game, boys. You can have another shot at me next pay-day.
- Got a cigarette?
- Yeah. Don't keep me on the porch like I'm selling something. All right, come on in.
- They're a little squashed.
It's all right. They'll do.
I see you got things fixed up some.
I try.
Looks pretty good,
except your sweet potato's got the blight.
I can't seem to get one started.
They need love and care like all of us.
I'll keep it in mind.
Could I have a match?
Well, what have we got here?
"Jiffy Portable Hairdryer."
"Triple screen."
Automatic toaster.
You been rustlin'?
I go in for those prize contests.
"How Shinette Shampoo
changed my life," in 20 words.
They give free trips to Europe.
I end up with the fountain pens
and the binoculars.
Won me a turkey raffle once,
but it was fixed.
I got friendly with one of them girls
picking the numbers.
It figures.
How much you
take the boys for tonight?
Twenty dollars and some change.
- You're a dangerous woman.
- I'm a good poker player.
You're a good housekeeper.
You're a good cook.
You're a good laundress.
- What else are you good at?
- At taking care of myself.
Shouldn't have to,
a woman looks like you.
That's what my ex-husband
used to tell me,
before he took my wallet,
my gasoline credit card
and left me stranded
in a motel in Albuquerque.
What did you do to make him take to
the hills? Wear your curlers to bed?
Ed's a gambler.
He's probably up at Vegas or Reno,
dealing at night,
losing it all back in the daytime.
Man like that sounds
no better than a heel.
Aren't you all?
Don't go shooting all the dogs
'cause one's got fleas.
I was married to Ed for six years.
Only thing he was ever good for
was scratching my back.
- Still got that itch?
- Off and on.
Let me know when it's bothering you.
We're injecting these cows and horses
with specimens taken from your herd.
In three to six days, we should
know what we want to know.
Move on in there! Get in that chute!
You all right, Lon?
She kicked you into the fence.
You skint your head a little.
Boy, you caught a lick.
Back to work.
Boys' ll be on you for a week, if you quit.
No need to rush him. You all right, Lon?
- You've had it, Fantan.
- Get him to bed.
All right, Jack, back to work.
All this time I thought you was skinny.
You weigh a ton.
I can't seem to get my head on straight.
- I think I'm gonna lose my breakfast.
- Not over me. Hold your fire!
- Sugar! You're white as a sheet.
- Sure, you're getting flour all over me.
- What happened?
- A cow cuddled up to him.
- Shouldn't a doctor look at him?
- Pay five bucks for aspirin? He'll mend.
That's it. I draw the line at bedpans.
Thanks, Hud.
Gold-brick for the rest of the day,
just don't stretch it into two.
Here, let's get those boots off.
Cold lemonade.
Here. Oh, come on,
they're only lemon seeds.
That better?
You ought to doze off now.
Gee, Alma, you're cool.
You smell of lemon.
- Alma?
- What is it, sugar?
- You're really beautiful.
- Oh, sure I am.
You're one of the best people
there ever was. You're good to me.
- In fact, you're good, period.
- You be good, too. Get some sleep.
Morning, Granddad.
- How are you today, Lonnie?
- Good. Real good.
Have I been sawing wood up there!
I slept round the clock.
I feel almost like working.
What have you got for me?
Patch a little fence?
Pull up some weeds?
Work a few calves?
I don't guess we'll do anything much.
No point wasting work
until I find out about my cattle.
We'll just roll over and play dead
and let 'em shovel dirt in our faces.
If my cattle don't get a clean bill
of health, we are just about dead.
Dead broke.
We've bred this beef all our
lives to get the best stock in the country.
The government will end up paying
four bits on the dollar.
- Poor but honest. That's us.
- We ain't sure. We'll just have to wait.
Don't get sores on your butt doing it.
I could do without that noise, Lon.
Go stretch your legs a little, will you?
Where's that bottle? I had a bottle
of Jack Daniel's in that cupboard.
- You drank it.
- When?
Instead of dinner, Wednesday night.
Don't remember.
If you think I drank it,
I only drink Tokay wine.
And I bet you keep your little finger
crooked while you're doing it.
Go stick your head in the water
trough and sober up for lunch.
Don't you find me in control of myself?
- I'd hate to see you walk a straight line.
- That's easy.
I don't like sudden passes.
We'll ease into it, then. There's another
one coming up on your right.
Don't you ever ask?
Only question I ever ask is, "What time's
your husband coming home?"
What's keeping you?
You're over the age of consent.
- Way over.
- Let's untie our shoelaces.
I've been asked
with a little more finesse in my time.
Yeah.
I wouldn't want to come on crude.
No, ma'am.
I'll bring you a 2lb box of candy,
maybe some perfume.
How about some coloured beads
and wampum?
- Whatever it takes to make you trade.
- No, thanks.
I've done my time with one cold-blooded
bastard. I'm not looking for another.
It's too late. You already found him.
You hardly touched your plate.
Nothing to do with your cooking.
I just ain't hungry.
- Anything from the vets?
No, they're taking their time.
I ain't gonna sit around here and stew.
The Kiwanis are waiting.
- Gonna be at that pig scramble?
- Yeah.
See if I can make the Bannons
look good for a change.
You honchos want to come,
there's room in the cheering section.
They're letting ladies in free tonight.
You just might qualify.
That's the first time Hud asked me to go
any place. I wonder why he did.
Lonesome, I imagine.
Trying to scare up a little company.
Lonesome?
He can get more women than anybody.
That ain't necessarily much and
it ain't necessarily company.
Women just like to be around
something dangerous part of the time.
Even Hud can get lonesome
once in a while.
Well, I wouldn't mind watching him
chase those squealers.
- Then we'll go on in.
- I'll stay home. I don't like pigs.
Let's give these kids a hand.
Applaud for the kid you liked the best.
That's it, ladies and gentlemen,
looks like number ten won it.
You've seen one kind of twisting,
you're about to see another.
We've got ten men
gonna tie themselves in knots
trying to catch the fastest pigs
you've ever seen.
The first to catch his pig
and bring it here is the winner.
If you boys will come on in,
we'll get this started. Come on.
- You got the pigs ready?
- You bet.
Come on, let's go then.
You're outside there.
Wag, pull your hat off. Let's go.
When I say three we'll go.
One, two, three, go!
It looks like we got a winner,
Hud Bannon.
Hud, that pig looks
about as dirty as you do.
Towel?
Thank you for turning out.
We hope you enjoyed yourselves.
We look forward to seeing you
next year at the contest.
Wish I could still get around
the way you do.
You sure churn up that dust.
I want to kick up more before
the night's over. Anybody interested?
That's enough excitement for me,
I guess.
I'll be getting back. Lon?
It's still kinda early.
I might stick around with Hud for a while.
I'll leave the door open for you.
Hitch up your pants. I'll get cleaned up,
then I'll buy you a drink.
- Want to put a little kick in that?
- Sure. OK.
Come on, I can handle it.
Whoa! Whoa!
- Pretty girl.
- Don't let me cramp you.
- I wouldn't make any move at her.
- Why not? You ain't nailed down.
- That's a woman and a half.
- You're a pretty good-looking kid.
Damp down that cowlick
and button your collar,
you might just make out.
I wouldn't mind driving her
the long way home.
Yeah, you ought to take a crack at that.
Get all the good you can out of 17,
'cause it sure wears out in a hurry.
Trouble is, I've got to like a girl a lot before I can work up to anything.
- I mean like her as a person.
- You're a regular idealist.
- What's wrong with that?
- I don't know. I ain't never tried it.
- I suppose you think I'm a jerk.
- What do you care what I think?
This is probably gonna hand you a big laugh... but I do.
You have another little drink.
And I'll have another little drink.
Then maybe we can work up some real family feeling here.
Well, I think I'll shove some change in that juke.
- Hi.
- What are you gawking at?
- I ain't gawking.
- I don't like fresh kids.
- Nobody's getting fresh.
- I'll take you out and loosen your teeth.
Are you having words with this youngster?
- I'm about to put him into the hospital.
- Is that so?
- Has he been bothering you?
- He ain't bothering me.
It's her he's bothering.
You didn't offer him any encouragement, young lady?
- No.
- That's funny.
I was sitting there and I got a little encouraged.
- Maybe it's the way you move.
- All right, I'll take you instead.
I don't want to be hoggish.
Lon, you want a piece?
That's one hell of a night!
I could do that about six times a week.
- You don't win them all, you know?
- I would if you were backing me.
That would make quite a combination.
Nobody'd ever mess with the Bannons.
Felt like old times there for a while.
- Your daddy and I used to take them on.
- He must've been a good old boy.
What, Norman? Yeah.
He used to leave his loose change out
when I was a kid so I could swipe some.
Let me take a girl from him once in a
while like I'd done it on my own.
He was bigger than you
and had a bigger wallet, but I tell you,
when you ain't being a pain,
you remind me of him.
- I do?
- Yeah.
Then how come
we don't hit it off so good?
I got short arms.
Never been anybody like old Norman.
Never will be.
He was one way-out boy.
Claimed he could hear the grass grow.
He got me to go to his pasture
one night to listen.
After three or four hours nipping away at
that bottle to keep the dew off,
I swore I could hear it, too.
That's the night I racked up the car.
Piled up on Samson Creek Bridge.
He died in half an hour.
I didn't even have a mark on me.
I wonder if your daddy's hearing the
grass now, growing up over his grave.
That story ought to cool you off some.
It doesn't.
Fantan, either you're soft-hearted
or soft-headed. I don't know which.
Hey, Granddad.
He's got you drunk.
What else has he given you a taste for?
- All we had was a couple of drinks.
- Don't remember you being a teetotaller.
I drink. I don't object
to his having whiskey.
- Something's eating away at your liver.
- You, Hud. Like always.
- What are you climbing on Hud for?
- You think a lot of Hud?
You think he's a real man?
You're being took in.
Listen to him. He's my daddy, he knows.
I know you. You're smart.
You got your share of guts.
You can talk a man into trusting you,
a woman into wanting you.
- I got it made!
- To hear you tell it.
Get it off your chest! What's been griping you is what I done to Norman.
You were drunk
and careless of your brother.
You had 15 years to get over it.
That's never been our quarrel.
- The hell it isn't.
- No. I was sick of you long before that.
Well, isn't life full of surprises?
And all along I thought it was
'cause of what I done to my brother.
I took that hard, but I buried it.
All right, what turned you sour on me?
Not that I give a damn.
Just that, Hud. You don't give a damn.
That's all. That's the whole of it.
You still don't get it, do you?
You don't care about people.
You don't give a damn about 'em.
You got all that charm and it makes the youngsters want to be like you.
That's the shame of it
'cause you don't value nothing.
You don't respect nothing.
You keep no check on your appetites.
You live just for yourself
and that makes you not fit to live with.
My mama loved me, but she died.
Why pick on Hud, Granddad?
He ain't the only one. Just about everybody around here is like him.
That's no cause for rejoicing, is it?
Little by little, the look of the country
changes because of the men we admire.
- I still think you nailed him pretty hard.
- Did I?

Maybe. Old people get
as hard as their arteries sometimes.
You're just gonna have to
make up your own mind one day
about what's right and what's wrong.
Where's that cotton-picking housekeeper
of ours? I want something to eat.
- It's late. She's asleep.
- Ain't that just keen.

Paying her good money to sleep
when I'm starving to death.
- I could fry you up an egg sandwich.
- Forget it.

Get out of here.
I can't think with you standing around.
I'm gonna knock some people
on their tails. You might be one of 'em.
Go on, get out of here!
- Boy, they mean trouble.
- I wish I'd stayed out of bull riding.

From the look of them,
you ain't riding very far.
Thanks, buddy.
I'd better go check my gear.
Never mind your gear, check your head.
That bull's gonna eat you up.
- How are you, Hotrod?
- Hi, Hud.

Get a good seat for the show?
They're getting two bucks
for those bleachers over there.
Be my guest.
- This is ten dollars, Hud.
- It's good. I didn't print it.
Well, thank you.
Stick with me.
Your jeans'll be full of change.
How come?
Well, I'll tell you.
Put on a clean white shirt
and saw a lawyer.
There's a law that says when old
folks can't cut the mustard any more,
you can make 'em let go,
whether they like it or not.
What are you pulling on Granddad now?
Something pretty raw, kid.
Yeah, it sounds like it.
Take your dough. I don't want it.
Don't look down your nose at me.
I'm gonna get old, too.
I don't aim to end up on county relief with
a bowl of soup and two cigarettes a day,
if I behave myself.
I want what I worked for.
I got a right to it.
You know something, Honcho?
You don't look out for yourself,
the only helping hand you'll ever get
is when they lower the box.
Now, you have fun, you hear?
- Hud?
- You're up awful late.
- I got a lot on my mind.
- Come on in. Take a load off your feet.
- Talk to the vet today?
- Yes, but I didn't get a lot of information.
Did you expect to?
Government man wants you to know
something, he'll call.
They're watching
the test animals pretty close,
but nothing's showed up yet.
- Hud.
- Yes, sir?
What's this tricky deal you're up to?
Lon tells me you're gonna
pull the rug out from under me.
That's right.
I ain't got all the rough edges
ironed out yet,
but I can give you an idea.
The main thing is you, old man.
You're too old to make the grade. Whether they liquidate us or not when this thing is over, you just better get out of my way. What in hell do you mean? When an old man buys a bunch of sick Mexican cows it means he's over the hill. You've got the incompetence, Daddy, and Hotrod's too young to take things over. So I get the court to appoint me guardian of your property. I don't know. If I don't get it one way, I'll get it another. Why, you're badly mistaken about all this. I'll be the only one to run this ranch while I'm alive. After that, you may get part of it. I don't know. But you can't get control of this place. No way in the world. Don't go making any bets on that. Maybe I treated you too hard. I made some mistakes. A man don't always do what's right. Daddy, you ain't never been wrong. You been handing out the ten tablets of law from whatever hill you could find since I was a kid. Shape up or ship out. That's the way you run things around here. Wild-eyed Homer Bannon, passing out scripture and verse like you wrote it yourself. So, I just naturally had to go bad, in the face of so much good. Hud, how'd a man like you come to be a son to me? Oh, that's easy. I wasn't on your doorstep. I wasn't found in no bulrushes. You got the same feelings below your belt as any other man. That's how you got stuck.
with me for a son, like it or not.
He was just so drunk, Alma.
Did he hurt you?
Should I take you to town,
get you a doctor?
Go on out of here.
- What are you looking at?
- I'm looking at you, Hud.
Climb off it. You've been
wanting to do the same thing.
Always been wanting to wallow her.
Yeah, I've been wanting to do it.
But not mean like you.
Here comes Mr Burris.
- Morning.
- Morning.
- You've missed breakfast.
- Thanks, but I've eaten.
I guess you've got something to tell us
or you wouldn't be here.
- I guess the tests are done.
- Yes, sir, they're done.
You got the worst thing you could have.
- And there's no cure at all?
- Not that we know of.
Like lightning. Don't hurt you till it hits.
Your cows are public enemies now. We
got to handle this fast before it spreads.
What do I do? Drive them into
a pit and shoot 'em? I can't abide that.
- It's terrible, even to think about.
- I've seen it during the Depression.
It's a sight worse to see
than to think about.
You're getting older.
You can afford to slow down.
The rest won't hurt your grass any.
You might even sell a few oil leases.
My daddy thinks oil is something
you stick in your salad dressing.
If there's oil down there, you can get it
sucked up after I'm under there with it.
But I don't like it.
There'll be no holes
punched in this land while I'm here. They ain't gonna come in and grade no roads so the wind can blow me away. What's oil to me? What can I do with a bunch of oil wells? I can't ride out every day and prowl amongst 'em like I can my cattle. I can't breed 'em or tend 'em or rope 'em or chase 'em or nothing. I can't feel a smidgen of pride in 'em 'cause they ain't none of my doing. There's money in it. I don't want that kind of money. I want mine to come from something that keeps a man doing for himself. We're much obliged to you for coming out in person to tell us. Start shooting. It didn't take long. It don't take long to kill things. Not like it does to grow. There's a couple we missed. I'll get 'em. Where do you think you're going? Finish this job. Somebody needs to. Well, you just close that gate. I'll kill them two myself, seeing as how I raised 'em. Something wrong with you, mister? - There's no guarantee you'll do it. - He just said he would. You get in the car. We'll finish burying those carcasses, then we're leaving. Mr Bannon can handle the rest of this without us bothering him. You just get along, Mr Burris. I know none of this ain't your doing. You see about the burying and then get that fella off my ranch. All I can say is, I'm sorry. I'm sure sorry. He ain't such a bad fella. Just got a cruddy job.
Boys, I don't plan to have any work around here for some time. I can't afford to keep you on till things get better so... I'll just have to let you go. Give me the rifle. Lord, but I have chased them longhorns many a mile. I don't know if I can kill 'em. But I guess I can. I guess this is the worst thing that ever happened to you. Oh, I'll get over it. If my health don't go to failing me. Lon, you go away someplace. Well, them old bulls are hard to kill. Drag 'em away and bury 'em. Bury 'em quick. Go on. Did you call about the bus for me? - Yeah, it leaves at 10.26. - Can I buy my ticket on it? Yeah, they said that would be OK. - I got $200 calf money, if you're short. - You just keep it. Well, I'm ready. I wish you weren't going off and leaving us, Alma. Look after your grandpa. He's getting old and feeble. He's your job now. We need you around here. I sure do. You'll get along just fine. I wish you'd stay. I've been all over this country, looking for the exact right place and right people, so once I got stopped, I wouldn't have to be moving again. And it just hasn't worked out. Goodbye, honey. You take care of yourself. And don't you be lazy now. How are you, Pee Wee? Looks like we're losing a good cook. Maybe we should've boosted your salary a little.
You ain't letting that little ruckus we had run you off, are you?
As far as I can get on a bus ticket.
Are you claiming I'm the first guy ever stuck his foot in your door?
- No.
- I'm the first that ever got rough, huh?
Well, I'm sorry. That ain't my style.
I don't usually get rough with my women.
Generally don't have to.
- You're rough on everybody.
- So they tell me.
You know, it would've happened eventually without the rough house.
You look pretty good without your shirt on.
Sight of that through the window often made me put down my dishtowel.
Why didn't you speak up sooner?
I'll remember you, honey.
You're the one that got away.
Come on, boy, get!
Knucklehead, why d'you hit the brakes?
You got your life's work paying for this car.
Granddad's out here.
He's crawling in the road.
Granddad, what happened?
Are you hurt?
I wanted to take a look around the place.
I fell off my horse.
- He's hurt pretty bad.
- Let me up.
- Come on.
- A man ain't to crawl.
Take my car to the ranch. Call an ambulance. Tell them to get here quick.
Tell them we got an awful sick man here.
Let me up.
It won't start.
All right, forget it. Forget it.
There's a bottle of whiskey in the dash.
Bring it over.
Easy, easy, old man.
Don't make me drink that stuff.
Go to the main road, flag a car down.
Get some help up here. Move!
- Don't send him away, Hud.
- I'm right here, Granddad. Don't worry.
I feel kinda cold.
Everything's gonna be all right.
- I don't know if I want it to be.
- Don't say that. You'll be just fine.
I feel like throwing in the sponge.
Like givin' up.
You've never quit on anything
in your whole life.
Hud there's waiting on me.
And he ain't a patient man.
He isn't gone, is he?
Yeah.
I meant to buy him a brand-new
blanket-lined jacket.
And give it to him some time or other.
Lonnie. Hey.
It was the best thing.
He was wore out and he knew it.
He didn't seem so bad.
He didn't seem so bad off at all.
Well, he was. Trying to get up.
Hurting himself.
He couldn't have made it.
Anyway,
he couldn't have made it another hour.
He could if he'd wanted to. You fixed
it so he didn't want to any more.
You don't know the whole story.
Yeah, him and me fought many
and many a round together.
But I guess you could say I helped him
about as much as he ever helped me.
How did you help him, Hud?
By trying to sell him out?
By taking the heart out of him?
By making him give up and quit?
Is that how you helped him?
He ain't in any loaf-around eternal life.
He's the way he always was.
Enjoying his good horses.
Looking after the land.
Trying to figure out ways
to beat the dry weather and wind.
Settle down. You've still
got the graveyard in front of you.
I know what you're feeling, but look at it
this way. He's gone to a better place.
I don't think so.
Not unless dirt is a better place than air.
Well, we took him to the graveyard
and put him down.
It's all over with now.
- What have you got there?
- My gear.
Going someplace?
Yeah.
Travelling kinda light, ain't ya?
Got everything I need.
Planning to go for good?
That's right.
What about your half of the spread here?
Put my share in the bank. I'm going
somewhere else to work for a while.
If I can happen on to a job.
Ain't you a little bit green
to go cutting loose on your own?
Well, we'll see.
I was about your age
when I went in the army.
Your granddaddy bought me a Mars
candy bar at the station, and said,
"Character's the only thing
I got to give you. Be a man."
Well, I guess he was kinda worried.
Your trying so hard to get out of the draft.
Honcho!
I just wanted you to know that
if you don't make your million, you can
always come back and work for me.
I won't be back this way.
I guess you've come to be of your
granddaddy's opinion
that I ain't fit to live with.
That's too bad.
We might've whooped it up some.
That's the way
you used to want it.
I used to. So long, Hud.
Fantan, this world is so full of crap,
a man's gonna get into it sooner or later,
whether he's careful or not.