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# The Last Ride

By Rob Cohen

Bring you the one and  
only lovesick blues boy, Hank Williams.  
The Mother's Best Music Makers,  
and yours truly,  
Mother's Best li'l ol' boy.  
Hey, fellas, I'm glad to hear  
you holler this morning.  
The sun is up,  
and everybody's awake  
and a-rarin' to go,  
ain't they?  
Yes, siree, they got an  
oven full of hot biscuits  
they'll rare even fuller.  
The aroma of Mother's Best  
biscuits is strong in the kitchen,  
and we are ready to go.  
We got a young lady visiting  
again this morning.  
- You ready?  
- I'm ready, Hank.  
What you gonna do?  
Well, Hank, I'm gonna do  
something of yours.  
All the boys are  
gonna join up with her,  
and she's gonna sing you one  
now called Hey, Good Lookin'.  
Say hey, good lookin'  
What ya got cookin'?  
How's about cookin'  
something up with me?  
Sayin' hey, sweet baby  
Don't you think maybe  
we could find us  
a brand new recipe?  
I'm gonna throw my datebook  
over the fence  
Buy me one for  
five or ten cents  
Keep it till  
it's covered with age  
Ow!  
Damn it.

Let's go, let's go, let's go, let's go!

It's almost noon.

Hey.

You work on your car  
on your own time.

I just wanna get the tire changed  
before it starts raining.

Don't give a damn.

We got five cars to finish  
before closing time,  
and I'm going to  
Mobile for Christmas.

Yes, sir.

Damn it.

What?

Damn it to hell. Hold on.

You ordered the fuel  
filter for that Dodge?

Yeah.

Well, it's the wrong damn one.

And now they're pitching  
a bitch over there.

I ordered what you told me to.

I don't order  
the wrong parts, son.

And if Western Auto  
don't trade that filter out,  
it's coming out of  
your damn check.

Yeah, Charlie?

Yeah, it's just what I thought.

That numb nuts I got working for  
me, he screwed everything up.

Yeah.

Son, where's your manager?

Hey.

Hey, there.

Whoa. That's a mighty fine car  
there, mister. Brand new?

No, ain't got but about  
2,000 miles on it.

But we need to get her greased  
up for a trip up north.

Well, we can do her. We just

can't do her till next week.  
We got four cars ahead of  
you, and I'm closed tomorrow.  
Well, well, that's...  
That's just bad luck  
on both our parts.  
Ain't it?  
Say, chief, you  
don't know where I might  
could hire me a driver  
for a week or two, do you?  
No. No.  
Might do it myself  
just to drive this girl,  
but I gotta keep my  
hand on the plow here.  
Pay's good.  
No, no, no.  
Don't you tempt me.  
Sir.  
That driving job,  
how much does it pay?  
Well, I see  
you can grease them.  
How do I know  
you can drive them?  
I can drive them.  
\$10 a day plus meals and room.  
When does it start?  
Looks like you already  
got a job, son.  
When does it start?  
Can you handle  
a car in the snow?  
Hell, I bet you ain't  
even never seen snow.  
All right, look,  
be at this address

**Monday at 8:**

And clean your ass up.  
Boss, we're using  
the name Wells on this trip.  
This is Mr. Wells.

Nice to meet you, sir.  
Okay, then.  
Need to make it to Knoxville  
tonight, about seven, eight hours.  
Might be some  
bad weather coming in.  
Now, your passenger is not to have  
any whiskey, do you understand?  
Yes, sir.  
Now, he's gonna ask.  
But if he shows up drunk  
or too hungover to work,  
you don't get paid.  
Are we understood?  
Yes, sir.  
Have a nice trip.  
Don't he have any luggage?  
Everything's in the trunk.  
Better get going. Wanna get  
ahead of that weather.  
Yes, sir.  
Oh, oh!  
I'm back in the saddle again  
Out where a friend...  
I got some business  
over on Jackson Avenue.  
Take me there first.  
Local kid. Good driver.  
Just dumb enough to do it.  
What do you  
mean "dumb enough to do it"?  
What am I gonna do  
about these shows?  
Hank booked these shows  
and I'm telling ya...  
Sorry, pard', Mr. Wells  
ain't my problem no more.  
He gonna be your problem  
as soon as you call O'Keefe  
and tell him what's going on.  
I'm telling you  
right now, he's gonna...  
No, you tell O'Keefe.  
You tell O'Keefe.

So what the hell am I  
supposed to tell O'Keefe?  
Driver just up and quit and all  
the money he's paying you?  
Look, life's too short.  
And that ship is heading  
for the rocks real fast.  
So goodbye and good luck, and make  
sure you get my check in the mail.  
Let's go, darling.  
Wait here.  
Help ya?  
I need to see the doctor.  
He's with a patient.  
You want me to phone  
you in a prescription?  
It's a personal matter.  
I said Dr. Stoneacre  
is with a patient.  
It's all right, Mary.  
Come on back.  
I swear.  
Son, you look like hell.  
Why don't we put you  
back in the hospital again?  
Oh!  
I gotta go to work.  
I'm fine.  
You don't look fine.  
Where's your wife?  
Which one?  
You're not gonna mess  
this one up too, are ya?  
She's at her mother's  
till I get back.  
I'm here about Betsy.  
I reckon she'll be having  
that baby any day now.  
I reckon she will.  
Well, I just want to...  
Wanna make things right.  
That won't be easy.  
I wanna take care of the...  
You know, the birth and all that.

Will you be the one to do it?  
Most likely.  
Well, this should cover it.  
If you need anything else, you just ask me.  
You know I'm good for it.  
You shouldn't be  
going anywhere, son.  
One of these days,  
you're gonna have to learn  
spina bifida's not  
like the common cold.  
I gotta go back to work. All this  
sitting around is killing me.  
I don't need  
your damn help, boy.  
Get me the hell  
out of this damn town.  
I don't believe it.  
Hold it, hold it.  
Stop the car.  
Back it up.  
George, you ol' S.O.B.  
The hell you doing, boy?  
Well, as I live and breathe!  
Let me look at ya.  
What're you doing out here,  
playing guitar in this cold?  
Trying to make a dollar.  
You know it's true.  
'Cause it is hard out here.  
I know, I know.  
I got something here that might  
warm ya up a little bit.  
Help yourself.  
- How ya doing?  
- I'm doing all right.  
They hired some  
hillbilly kid over here  
to take me up to  
Charleston, West Virginia.  
I'm playing up there.  
You done hit the big time.  
Yeah. Yes, sir.  
So proud of ya.

Seven thousand people  
up there, they tell me.  
You shut your mouth.  
Yes, sir.  
Yeah, 7,000 people.  
And you got that fine Cadillac.  
Mmm-hmm.  
Well, I hope I get to ride  
'fore it gets too late  
See, I got me some dreams  
that just can't wait  
I need some cherry Luden's. Package  
store up ahead. Pull over.  
Get me some Falstaff.  
Sir?  
Beer, boy.  
You expect me to ride 800  
miles without a damn beer?  
Well, no, sir.  
It's just that...  
That's okay.  
I don't wanna get sleepy.  
Well, suit yourself.  
Let's get going. We're  
behind schedule already.  
Oh, yeah.  
There's a dark  
and a troubled side of life  
There's a bright  
and sunny side, too  
Though we meet with  
the darkness in strife  
The sunny side we also may view  
Keep on the sunny side,  
always on the sunny side  
Pass his ass.  
It will help us every clay  
It will brighten all our way  
If we keep on  
the sunny side of life  
We're goin' be in Alabama till summer.  
Get around him.  
I'm trying to, sir.  
Damn hillbilly.



Blow the horn.  
Blow the damn horn, boy!  
Do it again. This son of a  
bitch is gonna pull over.  
Sir, there's no shoulder here.  
Boy, what did I just say?  
He shouldn't have done that.  
I want you to pass  
his ass right now.  
Mr. Wells, you're  
not gonna shoot...  
Hey, just do as I say!  
Please, Mr. Wells,  
we can't...  
Do not call me by my name.  
Are we clear on that?  
Now, I want you to get my Eldorado  
Cadillac around this dirt dog  
or I'm gonna blow them big ass  
ears of yours right off your head!  
Hey, boy!  
You like to drive  
like an asshole, there?  
Can chase them pigs  
all night long!  
Keep on the sunny side,  
always on the sunny side  
If we keep on  
the sunny side of life  
It will help us every day  
It will brighten all our way  
If we keep on  
the sunny side of life  
Fill 'er up?  
Yeah. Hi-Test.  
Where the hell are we?  
Lone Oak, Tennessee.  
I gotta take a leak.  
I was about to close up.  
Y'all nearly missed me.  
I'm glad. I was trying to  
stay ahead of the storm.  
Yeah.  
They're calling for sleet

all the way to Carolina.  
How far is it to Bristol?  
Oh, about five hours, I guess.  
I don't know  
with this weather, though.  
I think this is  
a big one coming in.  
Well, your oil was fine,  
but she was thirsty.  
That's \$8 even.  
I'll be right back  
with your change.  
Hey, you got a snack machine  
or anything in there?  
No, it's busted.  
Got some leftover  
Christmas candy though.  
You can have all that you want.  
I don't eat that crap.  
Is there any place I can get  
some supper around here?  
There's a diner about  
10 miles up the road.  
Any damn good?  
No, but it's all there is.  
Well, let's go, boy.  
I'm about to starve to death.  
Happy motoring, buddy.  
Turn on the radio.  
Pancakes and  
cheese Pancakes and cheese  
Change it.  
Ridin' through the  
jungle on the Wabash Cannonball  
Aw, hell, change that.  
As I sit here  
tonight, the jukebox playing  
Oh, yessa.  
The tune about  
the wild side of life  
As I listen to words  
you are sayin'  
It brings memories  
when I was a trustful wife

Are you worried  
about the weather?  
Yes, sir, I am.  
Hell, this ain't nothing.  
I left Memphis  
in a tornado once.  
Rolled into Gulfport in the  
middle of a damn hurricane.  
Well, I just don't want the  
road to freeze on us, is all.  
What time do I have  
to be in Charleston?

**7:**

Easy.  
More coffee, please.  
You got a name, boy?  
Silas Combs.  
Where you from?  
Sorbonne.  
Sore Bone.  
I ain't never heard of it.  
It's down by Venable.  
Sound like a hellhole.  
Thank you.  
It's not so bad.  
This is WGN Chicago.  
Now, here's one of  
last year's biggest hits.  
(mo, Com Heart,  
written by Hank Williams.  
I tried so  
hard, my dear, to show  
that you're my every dream  
What do you think of this song?  
It's all right, I guess.  
I hate it.  
Now we talking.  
Sure you don't want a beer?  
No, sir. Thank you.  
There's no way we're gonna  
make it to Bristol.  
I don't even think we'll make  
Knoxville, the way it's snowing.

What the hell time is it?

**10:**

Just get to Chattanooga.

I know a hotel there.

Sir, that's barely

100 miles we're making.

It's gonna be hard to catch up  
tomorrow, especially in this.

Sorbonne, are you being  
paid to think or drive?

Answer me.

Drive.

Good. Then we  
understand each other.

Why don't you

swing low, sweet chariot

Stop and let me ride

Swing low, chariot

Stop and let me ride

Rock me, Lord Rock me,

Lord Calm and easy

I got a home on the other side

Why don't you swing low,

sweet chariot

Stop and let me ride

Swing low, chariot

Stop and let me ride

Rock me, Lord Rock me,

Lord Calm and easy

I got a home on the other side

Swing, swing, swing, swing

Good evening, sir.

Do you have a reservation  
with us this evening?

No, sir.

We're just...

I'm sorry.

We're all full up.

Good evening, sir.

Welcome back to The Belmont.

Thought you were all full up.

I believe we just

had a cancellation.

Swing low, chariot  
Stop and let me ride  
Rock me, Lord Rock me,  
Lord Calm and easy  
Whoa!  
Careful with his guitar.  
You are new, aren't you?  
Mr. Wells is  
a regular, huh?  
Yeah.  
Mr. Wells is an ol' favorite.  
I better take this.  
I got a home on the other side  
They only had one room left.  
Well, I can just  
sleep in the car.  
What, and freeze to death?  
You that scared of me  
already, boy?  
Merry Christmas, slick.  
Thank you, sir.  
You know, it's always  
good to see you.  
I bet it is.  
Bartenders, bellboys and cops,  
you take care of them,  
they take care of you.  
I gotta make me  
a telephone call.  
Yes, sir.  
I'll meet you  
downstairs at the bar.  
Mr. Wells, sir...  
Wait. Let me guess.  
OI' Snake Belly told you  
I wasn't supposed to drink  
any whiskey now, didn't he?  
He said I don't get paid  
if you show up drunk.  
Boy, who do you think  
is paying you?  
Fire that weasel-eyed  
thief anyway.  
Yes, operator, I'm still here.

The call has been refused.  
What do you mean, refused?  
The party will not accept the charges.  
He does not know a Mr. Combs.  
Oh.  
Can you try again  
with the name Mr. Wells?  
That's my employer.  
That's who I'm calling for.  
Hello.  
OPERATOR'. Sorry to  
bother you again.  
Person to person collect call  
for Mr. O'Keefe from Mr. Wells.  
Will you accept the charges?  
Yeah, I'll accept.  
Where are you, boy?  
And where'd you come up with a  
doofus name like Silas Combs?  
Is this Mr. O'Keefe?  
Who is this?  
This is Silas Combs. My  
instructions were to call you.  
Where's Stan?  
I don't think I know Stan.  
He's a tall guy. Mr. Wells  
calls him Snake Belly.  
Oh, yes. That's who  
gave me the job.  
Why aren't you calling him?  
Well, this is  
the number he gave me.  
I thought you were  
Mr. Wells' business manager.  
No, I'm not his business manager.  
Where are you?  
Chattanooga.  
Chattanooga? Is that all?  
Yeah, we got a late start. And  
then the weather turned bad on us.  
Is he drinking?  
No. No, sir.  
Yeah, right.  
You may have noticed Mr. Wells

will take a drink of whiskey.  
Yes, sir, I have noticed that.  
Look, it is very important that you  
get him to Charleston tomorrow  
and that you  
get him there sober.  
Are you listening to me?  
Now, there are a lot  
of people, mainly him,  
who are counting on you.  
This is your one and only job.  
I'll do my best, sir.  
All right. Call me in the morning.  
I wanna know when you leave.  
Okay-  
I'm expecting somebody.  
A doctor.  
Need me a shot of B12.  
Work like a charm.  
What're you drinking, Sorbonne?  
Nothing, thanks.  
I asked you what  
you were drinking.  
Beer, I guess.  
Is that that country singer?  
Yeah, I think it is.  
I do love a road trip.  
Hey, how old are you?  
Nineteen.  
Oh. Good.  
I'd hate to think I was contributing  
to the delinquency of a minor.  
Thank you. Hey, chief.  
Can you get those two  
pretty girls over there  
a round of drinks  
on us, please?  
So you like beer, boy?  
I can take it or leave it.  
Not me, Sorbonne. Not me.  
Is that your doctor?  
Yeah.  
Guess I better go  
get that shot of B12.

Go ahead, sir.  
Mr. O'Keefe,  
this is Silas Combs.  
Tell me you're on the  
road and not still at the hotel.  
He won't wake up. He just  
keeps rolling back to sleep.  
Oh, hell. Did he get  
drunk last night?  
Yes, he did. The doctor

**came about 11:**

What doctor?  
Why, I guess they're friends.  
He gave him a vitamin  
shot or something.  
Son, you gotta get moving.  
What do I do?  
He looks real bad.  
You want me to call  
that doctor back?  
No. Can you dress him?  
Okay-  
Now, listen to me.  
Everything,  
and I mean everything,  
is riding on you  
getting there tonight.  
Do you understand me?  
Yes, sir.  
Here we go again.  
I'm getting too old for this.  
When leaves begin to die  
That means  
He's lost the will to live  
I'm so lonesome  
I could cry  
The silence of  
A falling star  
Lights up a purple Sky  
And as I wonder  
Where you are  
I'm so lonesome  
I could cry



Turn the radio on.  
What's the matter,  
you don't like music?  
Never much cared for it.  
What the hell time  
is it, anyway?

**About 11:**

What we got,  
like 300 more miles to go?  
More like 400.  
Well, you gonna have to  
do better than that, boy.  
I gotta be there  
in seven hours.  
The roads are real bad, sir.  
I'm going over the speed limit as it is.  
I can't go any faster.  
Boy, this Eldorado  
is the best damn car  
that ever rolled  
out of Detroit.  
There ain't no road  
she don't eat for lunch.  
Well, I can make it up  
when we get on the highway.  
Punch it, boy.  
How the hell  
did I get in this car?  
I put you here.  
Did I dress myself?  
No, sir, I did it for you.  
You didn't go poking around  
in my suitcase now, did you?  
I put your gun in there  
after I unloaded it.  
You do anything else?  
No, sir.  
You sure about that?  
Yes, sir, I'm very sure.  
'Cause I know exactly  
how much traveling money  
I brought with me, boy.  
I didn't see no money 'cause I

wasn't looking for no money, sir.  
I changed you  
into a fresh shirt  
and left you in your pants and  
your drawers from last night,  
it's all the same to you, sir.  
You can stop  
calling me "sir."  
I'll stop calling you "sir"  
when you stop calling me "boy."  
Well, now, that's fair.  
I call you Sorbonne.  
I like that.  
How old do you think  
I am, Sorbonne?  
I ain't much at guessing games.  
Go on, guess.  
I don't know.  
Twenty-nine.  
Oh, that surprise you?  
Yes, sir, it does.  
It's all that clean living I done.  
It ain't natural.  
My God, what a headache.  
Because the  
king of beers is leading all the rest  
When you say Budweiser,  
you've said it all  
Is this your business, son?  
Driving people  
around the country?  
No, sir.  
This is the first time.  
Fact, this is the first time  
I've been out of Alabama.  
What is your business then?  
I work at the garage.  
Ray's?  
Yes, sir.  
You like it?  
Not really.  
No, Ray screams a whole lot.  
Thinks I'm worthless.  
Well, there's no surprise

there. Ray's an asshole.  
What would you rather be doing?  
I don't know.  
You don't think about what you'd  
rather be doing? Why not?  
Well, I ain't gonna get to, anyway.  
I don't see the point.  
Boy, you're gonna have to pull over.  
I gotta take a leak.  
Do you mind if I ask  
what business you're in?  
Yes, I damn hell do mind.  
What the hell business  
you think I'm in?  
I reckon you're in  
the music business.  
You really don't know  
who I am, son?  
Sir?  
Wells isn't my real name.  
It's just a traveling name.  
Why don't you like music?  
Everybody likes music.  
I just don't.  
There's no reason.  
You don't ever  
listen to the radio?  
I don't got a radio.  
You want one?  
I guess.  
No radio, huh?  
Nope.  
How about a girl? You got  
yourself a girl, Sorbonne?  
No, sir.  
You think there might be  
a connection there?  
Sir?  
I asked you not to  
call me "sir" anymore.  
You do like girls, right?  
Yes, sir.  
I mean, yeah.  
Hugging and kissing, that sort

of thing, that appeal to you?

Yeah.

I'm gonna tell you

a little secret.

They love to dance.

Oh, they love it when you

make them swing a little bit.

Make them cry a little bit.

You don't think I'm riding in

the back of that Cadillac there

on account of my

good looks now, do you?

What is your real name, then?

It's Luke.

Just Luke, ol' buddy.

Oh, hell.

Well, you gonna

have to make a move.

I can't. I can't pass

this many cars.

What the hell is

an old truck like that

doing out here

in the first place?

You got to do it, Sorbonne.

Mr. Wells, I can't

pass this many people.

We can take them on the right.

Mr. Wells...

Just do it!

He's exiting up here.

I can see the turnoff.

Sorbonne,

I got some news for you.

You're gonna stay

on your side of town

unless you learn how to

start making decisions.

Or let me put it

in another way.

If I'm not in Charleston,

West Virginia by 7:00,

not only are you

not getting paid, boy,

your ass is  
walkin' back to Alabama.  
Oh, man.  
Oh, my God!  
Sorbonne!  
Oh, my God!  
Get your ass turned around, get  
over to the side of the road.  
Right now.  
Sir, are you all right?  
I been better, son.  
I been better.  
Let me see your license.  
You haven't been  
drinking, have you?  
No, sir, I have not.  
You just keep moving.  
Just move it.  
Where you boys headed?  
Charleston, West Virginia.  
Would you care to tell me what the  
hell that was all about back there?  
We're in a real hurry, sir.  
He's gotta be there by tonight.  
I'm awfully sorry for  
driving the way I was.  
Officer, I'll be more than  
happy to pay the fine.  
Hell, I'll even pay double  
the good state of Tennessee.  
They been awful kind to me.  
Put your wallet back  
in your pocket, sir.  
Now, I'm gonna tell you  
what you're gonna do.  
You're gonna drive straight 4 and  
3/10 miles to the town of Loudon.  
You're gonna turn right on Maple Street.  
There's the courthouse.  
You can tell your story  
to the justice of the peace.  
Well, we sure will. And I thank you,  
Officer. I hope you have a nice day.  
I'll be right behind you.

Well, that went pretty well.  
What in the world's  
in Charleston?  
Mr. Wells is in  
the music business,  
and he's expected there  
tonight, Your Honor.  
Is he a performer?  
Well, he has a guitar.  
I reckon he is.  
You don't know?  
I just started yesterday. I don't  
really work for him, though.  
I work for Ray's Tire and Auto.  
But I only took the job  
'cause a man needed a driver.  
Then he quit, so I had to...  
Son, have a seat.  
This is gonna take  
longer than I thought.  
Yes, sir.  
Where's the passenger?  
He was settling up with the  
driver whose car got bent,  
and now he's vomiting  
in the men's room.  
Did you question him?  
Not yet.  
Trooper Hamilton here detected the  
strong odor of alcohol in your vehicle.  
Is the passenger the only  
person been drinking?  
Yes, sir.  
Well, that helps you a little,  
son, but you're still in trouble.  
What in the hell  
were you thinking?  
I can't say no to him. You  
know, he's got a real temper.  
He made you?  
Yes, sir.  
How'd he do that?  
Did he have a gun?  
Did he threaten you?

He said I'd have to  
walk home if I didn't.  
But you were in  
control of the vehicle.  
And your license says  
you're a legal adult.  
Now that makes you  
the responsible party.  
You should've said no, son.  
That would have been  
a whole lot better decision.  
Am I going to jail?  
I apologize for the  
delay, Your Honor.  
Are you all right?  
Touch of the flu.  
Well, we're almost done here.  
So you're pleading guilty  
to the trooper's charge?  
\$100 or 10 days in jail.  
What about the car?  
Are you the owner?  
Yes, I am.  
Show me the proof, and I  
reckon you're free to go.  
Mr. Wells, sir,  
I ain't got any money.  
I was just doing  
like you asked.  
Just pay the  
damn fine, Sorbonne.  
You gotta get me to Charleston.  
He's just doing his job, like you boys.  
It's my fault.  
Well, how 'bout you boys slowin'  
down and enjoyin' the ride?  
Lot of drunks out there  
on New Year's.  
We'll do that. You all have a  
happy New Year now, all right?  
You all take it easy next time.  
Had you goin' for a minute  
back there, didn't I?  
You don't look so good.

I just need to  
take a nap, is all.  
We better get gem'. We  
got some "me to make up.  
Yes, sir.  
Turn on the radio.  
Bristol.  
Virginia on one side of the  
street, Tennessee on the other.  
This here's the cradle,  
Sorbonne.  
Sir?  
Country music.  
Jimmie Rodgers and the Carters,  
they brought it down from the  
mountains, turned it into pure gold.

**Is it really 1:**

Yes, sir. I mean, yeah.  
We ain't gonna make it, are we?

**Not by 7:**

**11:**

but it's clouding up again.  
It might snow.  
Damn.  
A lot of people counting on ol' Luke, boy.  
A lot of people.  
Take the next left up here.  
Flight 892 is now boarding.  
AH passengers please  
proceed to the gate.  
Flight 892 is now boarding. All  
passengers please proceed to the gate.  
No more flights to  
Charleston till tomorrow.  
Closest I can get is Wheeling,  
and that flight  
doesn't leave till 8:00.  
Let's find us a charter.  
Yes, sir.  
Just give us five minutes, we'll get  
her all fueled up and ready to go.



Sorry about the rush.  
Hell of a way to  
spend your New Year's.  
Well, you're paying  
for the privilege, hoss.  
You ain't never been on a plane  
before, have you, Sorbonne?  
Well, it beats  
grease-monkeying  
for that asshole Ray,  
though, don't it?  
Where are we?  
Right on top of Charleston.  
It's all socked in  
with snow and fog.  
Can't land anywhere  
for 100 miles.  
Okay, so?  
Sorry, hoss. We're gonna have  
to turn around and head back  
or we're not gonna have enough  
fuel to get back to Bristol.  
Just get me into Bristol.  
Roger.  
Well, it was fun  
while it lasted, Sorbonne.  
Now there's only  
one way you're gonna find peace.  
There's only one way  
you're gonna find happiness.  
There's only one way  
you're gonna find joy.  
Now, let me tell you...  
Here comes the hook.  
He's gonna ask  
for money right now.  
Folks, this Bible-thumper  
can only tell it like it is  
and spread the good word.  
Now, I ain't much  
asking for help.  
But the good Lord  
gave me the word,  
and I can't do his work

all by myself.  
And that's where you come in.  
Now, you may be  
asking, "Preacher,  
Turn that polecat off.  
"How much does God  
want me to give?"  
Well, how much you think...  
He said the world was  
gonna end in '49, too.  
Said it in Tuscaloosa right  
after 'Bama lost to Tennessee.  
Folks there  
thought it already had.  
Can you turn that  
heat up any more?  
Yes, sir.  
Sorbonne.  
Sir?  
If you call me sir one more time,  
I'm gonna go get my pistol.  
You all right?  
I just need to eat something.  
We gonna have to  
make us a phone call.  
Will you do it  
for me, Sorbonne?  
Yeah. I will.  
"Signs following."  
How's that?  
Well, that church back there,  
the message board said "Signs  
following." What does that mean?  
Oh. It means they dance and  
shake with the Holy Spirit.  
Oh.  
And they handle rattlesnakes, too.  
It's a hell of a show.  
Smell meat.  
Sure hope it ain't squirrel.  
Might be possum.  
Well, I wish I was in London  
or some seaport town  
I'd put my foot on a steamboat

and I'd sail the ocean 'round  
While sailing 'round the ocean  
while sailing 'round the sea  
I'd think of handsome Molly  
wherever she may be  
Help ya?  
How 'bout some grub  
for the weary travelers?  
Got some soup going.  
How's that suit you?  
That suits us just fine.  
How y'all doin' today?  
What do you call  
these parts 'round here?  
Muhlenberg County.  
It's God's country, ain't it?  
Y'all mind if I warm my  
hide by that stove there?  
Come on in.  
Here you go.  
Thank you.  
You play that thing  
pretty good now, don't you?  
I find my way around it.  
Well, let's hear it,  
if you don't mind.  
I don't mind.  
You want a blast?  
Help take that chill away.  
Why hell, I was wonderin'  
when you was gonna ask me.  
Colder than a polar bear's  
tit out there  
and you damn Virginians make a  
Alabama boy beg for some sunshine.  
You like hillbilly music?  
Yeah, I like hillbilly music.  
Yeah, I'll accept the charges.  
Where are you, son?  
Virginia, about  
an hour north of Bristol.  
We ran into a little trouble  
outside of Knoxville.  
What kind of trouble, Silas?

Police trouble.

We ain't gonna make it  
to Charleston by 7:00.

Yeah, I kind of put that together, son.

Thank you very much.

I'm really looking forward to this  
next call I'm gonna have to make.

Damn it, boy!

I thought we'd left  
all this stuff behind.

Four thousand people waiting  
to see him on New Year's Eve.

I think you got a bigger  
problem than that, sir.

What do you mean?

I mean, he's powerful sick.

Oh, hell, he's just hungover.

No, sir, I know hungover.

I've seen that my whole life.

This is much worse.

I think he better go to a  
hospital or come home.

It's that bad?

Yes, sir, it is.

This business is killing him.

And quittin' it  
would kill him quicker.

What do you want me to do?

Well, there's no point  
in going to Charleston.

They'd probably just  
lynch you two anyway.

Tell you what. Get him to  
Ohio for the matinee tomorrow,  
and I'll meet you there.

Yes, sir.

Thanks.

He had a wife and six kids,  
and he ain't never  
comin' out of that hole.

Not even 30-years-old.

That's a damn shame.

That ain't the worst part.

What do you reckon the company

give his family? \$100.  
A man's life's only worth \$100.  
Trouble, leave me alone  
Trouble, leave me alone  
You were in that bar  
in Arkansas  
Every bottle in East Tennessee  
You left a trace  
in the lines of my face  
in the gutters  
of Bourbon Street  
Trouble, leave me alone  
Why must you torture me?  
I wish you'd find another home  
I wish you'd just let me be  
Trouble, leave me alone  
Oh!  
I need something, Sorbonne.  
It's bad.  
Okay. Let me get you to a doctor.  
No.  
There's a town just up ahead.  
I just need me some  
Pepto-Bismol, is all.  
Here you go.  
I gotta get you to a hospital.  
What's the damn point?  
Mr. Wells...  
It's Luke.  
My name's Luke.  
Nothin'.  
How far is it to Canton, Ohio?  
About 300 miles.  
You know, there was a time when I  
didn't dream about nothin' but this.  
So be careful what you wish for, Sorbonne.  
It might just fall on you.  
What do you dream about?  
Nothin', sir.  
Do me a favor.  
Stop being respectful  
and kissin' my ass.  
Don't treat me like a boss man  
and don't keep quiet just 'cause

I'm the man in the backseat.  
And make me feel like there's  
somebody real up there  
and not just the back  
of some hired man's head.  
Can I ask you a question first?  
You were gonna leave me back  
there in Tennessee, weren't you?  
Well, ol' Luke has a history  
in this part of the world.  
Figured I might have to get  
while the gettin' was good  
and find somebody else  
to bail your ass out.  
What are you writin'?  
Oh. None of your damn  
business, that's what.  
We was talkin' about you.  
You go to high school?  
I quit in the 10th grade.  
How come?  
Just didn't take.  
Didn't take.  
So you fix cars.  
Yeah.  
But you ain't  
any damn good at it.  
Well, I just don't  
care for it, is all.  
But what do you care for?  
Not music. We know that.  
Not really.  
Sports? Baseball,  
football? Cock fighting?  
How 'bout girls? We already  
talked about women, right?  
Yeah, we did.  
You ever have one?  
No.  
You're probably  
better off for it.  
All they do is  
tear your heart out  
and then leave you standing

there like a damn fool.  
What's your daddy do?  
Time.  
Oh.  
That's why that old boy back there  
scared the shit out of you.  
You scared of that, ain't you?  
Followin' in Daddy's footsteps.  
How 'bout your mama, then?  
What's she do?  
I don't wanna talk about this.  
My mama ran a whorehouse.  
Beat that.  
Don't wanna talk  
about my family, Mr. Wells.  
Luke. Whatever your name is.  
My daddy took me down to Gulf  
Shores when I was a boy.  
Told me about footprints  
in the sands of time.  
I didn't understand it then.  
I think I might now.  
It don't matter, Sorbonne. Not a  
damn bit of it matters for nothin'.  
There's gotta be some freedom  
from these worries on my mind  
There's gotta  
be some rest for me  
somewhere down the line  
Gonna end this lonesome journey  
I started long ago  
Find a place to stop on...  
Your friend  
don't look too good.  
Yeah, I know.  
What do you call these parts?  
Freedom County,  
near Mount Hope.  
Your differential's leaking. It's  
probably just a seal. Caddies do that.  
This is brand new, though.  
How fiat are you gem"?  
Ohio.  
Hmm. Just a gasket.

Nothing critical,  
but you're gonna wanna get it  
looked at when you get there.  
You the mechanic?  
It's my station.  
Everything here.  
And it's just you?  
Just me.  
Well, it was my daddy's. Died  
last year of the black lung.  
So, New Year's Eve.  
Yup.  
You from around here?  
Born and raised.  
We're from Alabama.  
Saw that.  
You know,  
he's in the music business.  
I'm not, though.  
\$6.  
A 50? Got anything  
smaller than this?  
Sorry.  
You sure that's all you got? I only  
have three 5's and a stack of 1's.  
Do you want me to  
buy something else?  
Don't really matter. We'll  
be closed tomorrow anyway.  
Are you celebrating tonight?  
Nothin' to celebrate.  
Not this year.  
How about it just  
being over, then?  
I might drink to that.  
Stop talking.  
You made me lose count.  
Sorry about that.  
Damn.  
What is it?  
I only got \$42.  
We're even?  
Deal.  
My name's Silas.



Wanda.

It's very nice to  
meet you, Silas.

Happy New Year. Good night.

If you was to drink to  
this year being over,  
where exactly  
might you do that?

Dirty Johns.

Honky-tonk up the 56  
outside of Mount Hope.

About all there is  
between here and Ohio.

Well, I'd like to have  
that drink with you, Wanda.

You and your friend  
from the music business?

Thanks, but I gotta  
do the books.

You know, I ain't never  
asked a girl out before.

I reckon I was about scared half  
to death what you just said.

But now that you did, I don't  
know what I was so scared of.

It's New Year's Eve.

Why don't you let ol' Luke  
buy you a drink somewhere?

No, Luke.

Tonight, I'm buying.

Oh, I can't help it  
if I'm still in love with you  
I'm going from Reno  
down to Chino with a beautiful Latino  
that I stole from Kino Gino  
when he lost his poker face  
How he'll get up to Fargo  
I'll sure be damned if I know  
Evening, boys.

Fellas.

Oh, let's go!

My woman left me back in Tahoe  
for a man they call Diablo  
I'd like to say I miss her so

but it's a sin to lie  
'Cause that  
darling little Sheila's  
You look like you never  
been honky-tonking before.  
Well, I haven't.  
Well, it's tricky. But  
I'll talk you through it.  
When we got to San Diego  
said her llamo was Consuelo  
She no speak Americana  
and I don't hablo Mexican  
Well, it's a good thing  
that she was pretty  
'cause when we  
pulled into that city  
I found out she was all woman  
And boy, she knew I was all man  
Happy New Year, Sorbonne.  
Happy New Year.  
Let's take it home.  
You ever played  
in a place like this?  
About 1,000, I reckon.  
Gonna get your guitar?  
No, I think I better  
save that for tomorrow.  
Mr. O'Keefe will  
meet us there.  
How'd he take it  
when you told him  
I wasn't gonna make Charleston?  
He wasn't too happy.  
No. I guess he wouldn't be.  
He had to cash in a few favors  
to get me a book there.  
This may come as a surprise  
to you, Sorbonne,  
but I have a reputation of being  
a bit of a problem child.  
I ain't never had  
a friend, Sorbonne.  
Ever  
I don't know the first thing about

loyalty 'cause I ain't never seen it.  
I'm sorry about Tennessee.  
I was thinking about  
what you said earlier.  
Maybe driving's  
a good business to be in.  
Well, you passed your audition.  
You made it two days with me,  
and you're still here.  
That's better  
than anybody, so far.  
I saw you talkin' to that little  
thing at the fillin' station.  
I asked her out.  
You did what?  
She said no.  
Well, that don't mean nothin'.  
That's part of a woman's  
schoolin', you know?  
They always say no  
on the first go-round.  
She didn't mean it.  
I think she meant it.  
Mmm-mmm.  
No, I saw her watchin' you,  
and now I know why.  
This is a threshold moment  
for you, Sorbonne.  
I want you to take my Cadillac,  
and go back to  
that fillin' station  
and get you a date  
for New Year's.  
Mr. Wells, look at me.  
All the money I got is  
yours in an envelope.  
She can smell what side  
of town I come from.  
And besides, she said no.  
She has to do her books.  
On New Year's Eve?  
All right.  
You go and get that woman.  
And you get to keep this

on top of everything else.  
Now, if you don't get her, you  
don't get paid for nothin'.  
That's not the deal we made.  
You just ask Mr. O'Keefe what  
a son of a bitch I can be,  
in case you suddenly  
have cause to doubt.  
I can't leave you here alone.  
I'll be all right.  
OI' Luke, he can fend  
for himself pretty good.  
Thought you said all they did  
was tear our hearts out?  
Well, hell, you gotta  
die of somethin'.  
I'll be back.  
My delta queen, Ilene  
How are you?  
I'm fine.  
How are you this evening?  
We're just passin' through.  
From here, there.  
From everywhere.  
We are drivin' through on our way  
up from Alabama to Charleston.  
Oh, I love Alabama. It's so pretty.  
I love that state.  
It's a great state.  
Sorry. Don't mind him.  
He's just my ex-husband.  
I hope I'm not  
causing any trouble.  
No.  
He's just more of  
a nuisance than anything.  
Is that right?  
Stop it! Stop!  
Hey! Hey! Hey! What the hell do you  
think you're doing? He's sick.  
If he's so sick, then why  
is he dancing with my wife?  
Ex-wife, Leroy!  
Asshole!

You wanna go again? You  
done or you want some more?  
That's enough of that crap.  
It's almost New Year's.  
Now, get in here  
and enjoy yourselves.  
Hey, you okay?  
Get me to the car.  
Okay.  
Is he okay?  
He'll be fine.  
What happened?  
What in the hell  
do you think happened?  
He sucker punched me.  
Well, let's just get out of here.  
I'll find you a hotel.  
Not so fast, Sorbonne.  
I'll be fine.  
I'll just be a second.  
The hell, you say.  
I stopped off  
at the river, Tonto.  
Filled my canteen.  
If you're back in less than  
an hour, you're fired.  
Is he okay?  
He's about the same.  
I changed my mind.  
Well, I'm glad.  
You sure this is champagne?  
Hillbilly champagne.  
Cheers, then.  
Lord!  
Yeah. Old Ned Brown's. You can  
taste his radiator every time.  
I never done anything  
like this before.  
What, drink moonshine?  
You know what I mean. I just...  
I didn't wanna, you know...  
Hey, do you like this music?  
Yeah, it's all right, I guess.  
Would you dance with me?

Even if I ain't much good?  
How do you know you're not?  
I ain't never done it before.  
Just go like you did in  
that fight out there,  
but slower  
and a lot less hittin'.

Okay.

I introduced him  
to my loved one  
And while they were dancin'  
my friend stole my sweetheart  
from me

I remember the night  
and the Tennessee Waltz  
Oh, I know just how much  
I have lost

For I lost my little darling  
the night they were playin'  
the beautiful Tennessee Waltz  
The beautiful Tennessee  
Waltz

All right, y'all! It's almost New Year's!

Let's count 'er down. Come on.

Five, four, three, two, one!

Happy New Year!

Should auld  
acquaintance be forgot  
and never brought to mind?

Thanks for asking me.

Thanks for being here.

You should probably  
get back to your friend.

Okay-

And auld lang syne  
Have fun in Ohio and  
if you ever come back through,  
maybe you'll stop for gas.

Sure.

It would be good to see you.

Happy New Year, Silas.

Happy New Year.

Should auld acquaintance  
be forgot

and never brought to mind?  
Should auld acquaintance  
be forgot  
Mr. Wells?  
We'll get warm in here  
in just a minute.  
You reckon there is any coffee  
to be had in there?  
I'll go check.  
I really appreciate this.  
It's the least I could do  
after the free floor show  
you boys give us last night.  
I sure do apologize for that.  
I saw him play  
in Shreveport once.  
You know, a man came after him on  
the stage for the same damn thing.  
I guess trouble just  
seems to find that ol' boy.  
But like I need to tell you.  
Yeah.  
It's on me.  
Thank you.  
And this too.  
Now, you tell him  
that my stage is his  
any damn time he wants it.  
I'll do that.  
Thank you very much, sir.  
All right.  
You have a good one.  
You too.  
Immortal home  
Oh, bear me away  
on your snowy wings  
to my immortal  
We still got a ways to go, Mr. Wells,  
but we're gonna make it, easy.  
Turn the radio on.  
Tell me of  
a home far beyond the skies  
Oh, they tell me  
of a home far away

Oh, they tell me of a home  
where no storm clouds rise  
Oh, they tell me  
of an uncloudy day  
Oh, the land of cloudless day  
I gotta pull in here  
for a scraper.

I can't see a thing  
out of this windshield.

Oh, the land of  
an unclouded sky  
Oh, they tell me of a home  
where no storm clouds rise  
Sorbonne.

Yeah?

You said Mr. O'Keefe is gonna  
be there waitin' for us?

Yeah, that's what he said.

Are you my friend, Sorbonne?

Sure.

Are you really?

Yeah, Luke. I'm your friend.

I really am.

I'm gonna go in here,  
and get a scraper  
and we'll get right back  
on the road, okay?

Open wide  
thine arms of love

Lord, I'm coming  
home

Lord

I'm coming

home

I sure do appreciate this. It  
shouldn't take me but a second.

I got at least 100.

Over at the bank,  
we give 'em out free.

Compliments First National.

You want a calendar?

No, this'll do me just fine.

I'll help you.

That's okay. I've taken



enough of your time.  
Hell, I don't mind.  
Earl's about to speak,  
and he's about  
as exciting as  
watchin' paint dry.  
I just come for the singin'.  
This ol' boy looks like he's  
in a little trouble there.  
He just had a rough night.  
You know, New Year's and all.  
If you say so.  
All right, that should  
be enough. Thank you.  
That's yours.  
Be careful out there.  
We sure will.  
Thanks again.  
God bless you.  
Both of you.  
...broadcasting system.  
Elected Vice President Richard M.  
Nixon will serve as grand marshal  
of the Tournament of Roses  
parade in California.  
Riding in his open car will be  
his wife and two small children.  
After the parade,  
the family will attend the...  
Hey, Luke, time to wake up.  
I gotta find us a place to eat.  
You ever been here before?  
Come on, Luke, time to wake up.  
Mr. O'Keefe's  
waitin' for us in Canton,  
and he's madder than hell  
at the both of us already.  
Luke!  
Luke. Hey, Mr. Wells.  
Thank you.  
Thanks for your help.  
Looks like it was a heart attack.  
He had two broke ribs.  
Appreciate it.

You give your statement?  
Yes, sir.  
Well, I guess  
it was a heart attack.  
But he had two broken ribs.  
What you know about that, son?  
Got into a fight last  
night over this woman.  
I never should've let him  
go in there, you know?  
I knew he was feeling bad.  
I let him have moonshine,  
and whiskey and beer.  
And I left him alone  
for a while.  
I'm really sorry,  
Mr. O'Keefe. I'm so sorry.  
You know, I traveled with him for  
six years, worked with him for 10.  
This was not the first time.  
I can promise you that.  
Now, he did this himself, okay?  
He didn't need a bit of help  
from you or anybody else.  
What happens now?  
Well, we'll take him  
back to Alabama, I guess.  
Need a driver?  
We'll handle it.  
But you might wanna steer clear  
of that vulture fight  
that's about to break out.  
I wish I could.  
We owe you some money.  
No, sir, I won't take it.  
I didn't do the job  
you hired me to do.  
You gave him what he wanted.  
He was the only one  
that wanted to do this trip.  
Besides, he said in his note to  
give you some money to buy a radio,  
whatever the hell that means.  
I got a lot to do before

the family gets here.  
Should I wait for the police?  
I'll handle it.  
Could I get somebody to give me  
a ride to a bus station, then?  
Well, you ought to be able  
to get yourself there.  
What you do from there  
is your business.  
Now, I'm not a lawyer,  
and I don't know that  
he was ever of sound mind,  
but that's definitely  
his signature.  
Which means that you are the  
new owner of this automobile.  
I reckon something must've  
gone right out there.  
I can't.  
Why not?  
It was his to give.  
And there's plenty of it for the rest  
of them to fight over. Trust me.  
Should I go back there?  
Well, you can go  
wherever you wanna go.  
But I'd do it pretty quick,  
if I was you.  
You done good, Mr. Combs.  
You done good.  
Thank you.  
Harry Truman was our president  
A coke and burger  
cost you 30 cents  
I was still in love  
with Mavis Brown  
On the night Hank Williams  
came to town  
"I Love Lucy" debuted on TV  
That was one big event  
we didn't see  
'Cause no one stayed at home  
for miles around  
it was the night

Hank Williams came to town  
Momma ironed my shirt and  
Daddy let me take the truck  
I drove on out to Grapevine  
and picked old Mavis up  
We hit that county line  
for one quick round  
On the night  
Hank Williams came to town  
A thousand people  
sweltered in the gym  
Then I heard someone whisper,  
"Hey, that's him"  
That's when the crowd  
let out this deafening sound  
it was the night  
Hank Williams came to town  
On and on,  
he sang into the night  
"Jambalaya," "Cheatin' Heart"  
"I Saw the Light"  
And how'd they get  
Miss Audrey in that gown  
on the night Hank Williams  
came to town?  
Remember,  
friends and neighbors,  
Hank Williams and  
all the Driftin' Cowboys...  
You don't have to come up poor  
on that red clay 'Bama land  
Or ride that o!' lost highway  
with a guitar in your hand  
But if you have a heartache  
that won't let go of you  
you might have  
the Hank Williams Blues  
Hank was only human  
just like me and you  
Ridin' in the back of  
that Cadillac in 1952  
No one knows for certain  
but I believe it's true  
He had a bad case

of the Hank Williams Blues  
Lord, when you got 'em  
You know by the pain  
You're hittin' on rock bottom  
out in that pouring rain  
Caught between everything  
Nothin' left to lose  
Lord, you've got  
the Hank Williams Blues  
Ashes to ashes  
Dust to dust  
Young turns to old  
like steel turns to rust  
And it comes just  
a little bit quicker  
when you're  
livin' the fast life  
The trail you're taking today  
Well, it could be  
your last ride  
Sooner or later,  
you meet your maker  
He's awaitin'  
somewhere down the line  
It ain't that far  
from your first breath  
till you say your last goodbye  
Well, a cowboy  
never mounts his horse  
on the good Lord's bad side  
'Cause the trail  
you're takin' today  
Well, it could be  
your last ride