

THE BALLAD OF BREWER GROUSE

Brewer Grouse, Main Folk Guy (Charles) - He is a piece of shit scum guy and everything always works out for him. Main financiers are big bankers. Sings pro-war songs against Christmas Island.

Cosmo Crease (Branson) - Folk singer, all of his songs are about food. Wears a lot of cologne (Croque Monsieur) has a song "I Like How Silly Fries Are" and "Hotdog Wind"

Selma Jones, Folk Singer (Lisa) - Really into Halloween. Her parents have cut off communication with her because they don't believe in Halloween, they're academic Communists. The producer is trying to set her up w/ Brewer to collab, because the Halloween shit isn't working and he's underwater on signing her to a record deal. No one has made the monster mash yet, so they think it's impossible to make a good halloween song.

Soap Weathers, the sellout (Nate) - Refuses to do shows for bankers and is supportive of the democratically elected president of Christmas Island. Basically makes Raffi style children's music about blocks and how to wash your hands, but for crowds of self-serious adults, and he has more respect and clout than anyone else in the scene.

Tipper Grouse, Brewer's sister (Alana) - Lives in the Lower East Side in a shoe. A big shoe. She has like dozens of kids and they are all between the ages of 0-2 years and none of them are twins. Unconditionally loves her shitty brother. "I know it's really hard to be a singer," has so much sympathy for him even though he's a whiny, selfish "creative" and she has to raise a million kids on her own.

Gundam Rask, Producer (John Semley) - Music producer who tasks Brewer and Selma with making a hit folk song.

Cobalt Tannins, Stuck up engineer (Joel) - Engineer in the studio, wearing a turtleneck and little black glasses.

Freddy Looter, Music journalist & narrator (Dave Weigel) - Shows up at all the shows... Passive aggressive music journalist who covers the scene for his job but hopes it will fail.

"Cookie," the guy who runs the Gaslight Grill (Andrew) - He owns and runs the club and also cooks, they have to play over the sound of the sizzling burgers cause it's a small venue and an open concept kitchen.

The Man in the Blue Suit - Andrew
BANKER - Taylor
DRACULA (post credits) - Patches
DYLAN - Patches

NARRATOR (FREDDY): February in New York City. So cold that your fingers stick to the strings of your guitar. You sure you wanna play that C chord? You're gonna be holding it till springtime. A gray man walks the gray street, hands in pocket, guitar on his back, staring at the pavement and muttering to himself. He shuffles across Beaver Street in lower Manhattan, his worn boots trampling through the untouched snow. He lifts his gaze to the far off glow of the Gaslight Grill, wondering when his luck would change.

BREWER: Oh. Cool. A dollar.

NARRATOR (FREDDY): Some men are destined for greatness. Others are merely men of their place and time, men destined to be ground into paste underneath the great wheel of history.

BREWER: Oh. Another dollar. That's two dollars.

NARRATOR (FREDDY): There's musicians who plow the fields, and musicians who reap the harvest. But there's only one place to find out which type you are. The stage. The Gaslight Grill is a place where fame and fate mingle—a volatile mixture that can either make you into a star or a crater. There's two paths you can wander and who's to say which is worse. You could be the guy who doesn't make it in the biz, and has to work in the laundromat. Or you could be the guy who sells out Philharmonic Hall but has to sing in a sailor suit and sit in Phil Harmonic's lap. Either way, you're going to be taking in loads.

BREWER: Wow! A third dollar! And a quarter!

NARRATOR (FREDDY): But this story doesn't begin in front of thousands of adoring fans at Philharmonic Hall. It begins in front of a sparse Tuesday night crowd at the Gaslight Grill. As for who this is, well, some men truly need no introduction.

[door chime sfx, grilling sfx in background]

BREWER: Hey everybody, it's me. Brewer Grouse. What's up Cookie?

COOKIE: You're late! You know, you're lucky I like you. I gave you the coveted 8 PM to 8:02 PM slot. Don't mess this up.

BREWER: Mess this up? Why? You seen any suits from Cream & Whistle Records here tonight?

COOKIE: Go look for yourself. I've been fighting for my life on this grill. I've made 200 cheeseburgers tonight and nobody's taken a bite. I thought getting folk musicians in here would drum up some business so I could afford to hire a cook. But it turns out that everyone who

comes to see folk music is broke and moody and skinny. Now I mostly use the kitchen to roll cigarettes, and those sell pretty good.

BREWER: Maybe you should stop giving out peanuts for free?

NARRATOR (FREDDY): The Gaslight Grill is a sanctum for lechers and layabouts. Dirty beatniks sprawl over the tables, sucking cigs, not a single one of them sitting in their chairs correctly, like God intended: two feet flat and hands on your knees. The floor is covered with peanut shells. Everyone's always spitting sunflower seeds all over the place. Even in February, there's guys bringing in Christmas nutcrackers to crack their own chestnuts they brought from home. Outside in the parking lot, a man in a pickup truck carefully places a single chestnut beneath a board then drives over it slowly to harvest the nutty innards of the delicious nut. He gathers up the remnants of the tough outer layers, walks into the Gaslight Grill, and tosses them onto the floor.

MAN: That's where that goes!

COOKIE: Thanks Rob, see you next week!

BREWER: You wonder why people don't order food here? There's plenty to eat on the ground.

COOKIE: Brewer, you look so skinny. Are you hungry? I can put out a few cigarettes on a plate for ya. By the way, Cosmo Crease was asking if you're around.

[door chime sfx]

COOKIE: Speak of the devil.

COSMO: Hey Brewer. I found a dollar earlier, I was wondering if it was yours?

BREWER: Thanks Cosmo. Looks like one of mine. You keep it, though. I'm sick of these things.

COSMO: Wow, thanks. I'll put it with my other ones. I'm starting a collection in my wallet.

BREWER: Cookie said you wanted to see me?

COSMO: Big news, Brewer, big news. We're going to be eating good tonight.

BREWER: Cookie paying you in cheeseburgers again?

COSMO: No. Well, yeah, but also, we got someone coming to see us play tonight. Someone important.

BREWER: An A&R from Cream & Whistle Records?

COSMO: No, not that good.

BREWER: Some girls? Are they willing to compromise on looks?

COSMO: No, not that good either. I feel like you're not excited anymore so I'm just going to tell you. Freddy Looter, that journalist is going to be here. He writes for the Warbler's Trestle, the biggest music magazine in the whole damn town!

BREWER: What do I care what some nerd-ass journalist thinks? What's he gonna do, assign my song some stupid score? Music's not about numbers. It's not about chords. It's not about notes or harmonies or melodies or rhythms. It's not even about the words. It's not about a feeling, and it's certainly not about the message. But a guy like Freddy Looter? He doesn't understand none of that.

COSMO: What's music about then?

BREWER: Oh, look, another dollar!

COSMO: Whatever, man, I don't care what this guy thinks, all I know is that if my set gets written up in the "What's Hot" section of The Warbler's Trestle, my album The Last Slice of Pie (Wouldn't You Know), it's gonna be selling like gangbusters.

BREWER: Gangbusters is selling pretty well. That album by Screwy Louie Donaldson.

COSMO: Not as good as Hotcakes. You know? That song by folk duo Barnes & Noble? Folk & Breakfast Magazine has it ranked #1 on their "What's for Breakfast?" chart.

BREWER: Be that as it may, the French Toast-toting syrup guzzlers at Folk & Breakfast wouldn't know good music if it was served to them in a skillet covered in cheddar and country gravy. My music is DIFFERENT from that slop. It has lyrics. Chords. Melodies. And most importantly, it has a message. That stuff used to matter, you know?

COSMO: Yeah. Music is good. Folk music is like the easiest kind of music cause you only gotta remember 3 chords. That's why I like it.

BREWER: So... Why aren't you playing tonight? Afraid of this big, bad music critic?

COSMO: Lost my guitar last night. Had a late dinner at the diner and decided to take the waitress home for dessert. After we had our ice cream sundaes, we had sex too. Great girl, I'm working on this song about her. It's called "Make it Crispy (Side of Fries)".

BREWER: You sure the song's about her?

COSMO: I wrote it during lunch so I may have gotten distracted. Say, you ever have a BLT? What's that stand for?

BREWER: There's a time for food and a time for music and never the twain shall meet. My music is about something IMPORTANT.

COSMO: Breakfast is the most important meal of the day.

BREWER: Shut up Cosmo. Now's not the time for breakfast.

COSMO: Speaking of time, aren't you supposed to be on stage right now? It's 8:01.

BREWER: Fuck! I missed half my set! See you after the show, Cosmo.

COSMO: I'll be watching. I saw a redhead with hair like strawberry ice cream sitting in the crowd. I'm gonna see if she wants to give me an ice cream headache.

BREWER: What does that mean?

COSMO: Not sure exactly, but it lets you know that I'm kind of a horny and hungry kind of guy.

[microphone squeals, grilling sfx in background]

BREWER: How is everyone tonight? Cookie. Cookie! No grilling. No searing any meat while I'm up here. Lower the temp. Caramelize some onions or something. Jesus Christ. In any case... I'm Brewer Grouse. And this is a little tune I wrote called "Let's Start a War (On Christmas Island) (Cannonballs and Coconuts)." Everyone shut the fuck up and listen cause this really fucking matters to me. This isn't like other music.

[He plays his song]

[Very mild applause sfx]

NARRATION (FREDDY): Perhaps now is the time to disclose that folk music really isn't my bag. The wispieness, the sweaters, it all rubbed me wrong, like the taint area on a new pair of corduroy pants. You know what I want to hear? A 12-minute song. A guitar riff using a whole-tone scale. An electric organ unironically teasing the melody of Yankee Doodle in the middle of a 4-minute solo. But as I looked at this man, his narrow shoulders shuffling down off the stage, spitting on the floor every five seconds, I thought... Maybe this guy's got it. There's huge buzz around this kid down at Wall Street, playing private gigs, IPOs, divorce settlements, and corporate mergers. Or maybe he's just the man of the moment. Either way, it's my job to find out.

FREDDY: Brewer Grouse, I presume. Freddy Looter, Warbler's Trestle.

BREWER: Yeah, yeah, I know who you are. You wrote that article on Cooter Cooper. Gave his album “Ham and Horse Racing” one star. Next day he hung himself with a guitar strap. Tried the low E string first, but it wasn’t sturdy enough.

FREDDY: I was just reviewing music. It wasn’t personal.

BREWER: You published a picture of his penis next to his home address.

FREDDY: He lived on Johnson Lane. I thought everyone would get a kick out of it.

BREWER: Well, tell that to those 14 orphans he left behind, Looter. You’ve taken from them a deadbeat folk musician father. Now they can’t even resent him for not putting food on the table. You know what else you took from them? Their college fund, that won’t be stolen from anymore.

FREDDY: Be that as it may, I’m not here to talk about Cooter Cooper. I’m here to talk about Brewer Grouse. It seems you’re the toast of the Wall St music scene.

BREWER: So what? I’ve heard a lot of buzz about your little rag on Wall St too. I never understood it.

FREDDY: A lotta bankers want to support the arts. Plus, to be honest, I think most of them are hate-reading it. It makes them mad when I say bad things about you and your friends. And I really think all your music sucks, and has no merit at all. So it’s kind of an interesting synergy. But who cares what I think. Can I buy you a drink? How about a Manhattan?

BREWER: I’ve been trying to get away from this place my whole life. I just can’t shake it. Nah. Bartender, get me a Long Island Iced Tea.

FREDDY: Make that two. So listen, I want to ask you a few questions. But I was wondering if you’d like to start with a bunch of vague and contradictory statements about what your music is like for a second? Maybe in a super indulgent way?

BREWER: Music is like... I hate music. Can’t stand it. But I don’t write music—I write stories. I paint pictures. I make movies. And all of that is in the songs. I don’t do “folk music” because I want to. I do it because I have to. The same way you have to breathe to live. See, for you, you don’t even think about breathing, right? And me, I don’t *think* about any of this folk music bullshit. But as a result, I have to think about every single breath I take, because my brain is hardwired to think about music. So if I don’t think about taking a breath, every 1 to 2 seconds, I don’t breathe.

FREDDY: Perfect. Let me ask you next—

BREWER: (Huge inhaling sound)

FREDDY: You ok?

BREWER: Sorry, I was thinking about music too hard for a second there. Ask your question.

FREDDY: Okay, um, there's a new—

BREWER: Holy smokes, look! A dollar!

FREDDY: There's a hot new artist on the scene. Soap Weathers. Came up in the same circles as you, right? Heard he's going to play on the Today Show for Baby AI Roker.

BREWER: Soap Weathers. What a fraud. What's he gonna sing, a song about a wooden choo-choo train? Make it knock over some blocks?

FREDDY: Yes. That's his new single. It's #1 on the Breakfast Charts. Even caught the attention of Cream & Whistle records.

BREWER: Well it makes sense why Baby AI Roker is into it. I like songs about adult things. Like a surprise assault on a small and nefarious island nation. Or like. A monte cristo sandwich, like Cosmo sings about.

FREDDY: If I'm being honest, the dude has got some chops. Sure, lyrically, it's a little juvenile, but man—I haven't heard anyone play the triangle like that my entire life. I just wish he was playing it in 9/8 time. But he'll get there.

BREWER: Well, what the fuck would you know? You're just another talentless typewriter jockey hoping to poke your nose into somebody else's business. Maybe the scene's not for you, man? We don't want your perfect hokey pokey society. To me, the white picket fence looks like jail bars. It looks like... an electric chair. Scumbag journalists like you are basically just printing lies on a rag. Why would I pay for a RAG? Does it look like I'm changing my oil? Well here's a headline for you. I never change my oil. I hate my stupid car! Besides, if I needed a rag, I would get one that didn't have lies printed on it. The generic kind is cheaper. Anyway. Thanks for the drink, pussy.

[Spit sfx]

COSMO: Whoa, Brewer! You're steaming! Are you alright?

BREWER: That fat fuck from The Warbler's Trestle is trying to indoctrinate me!

COSMO: What does that mean? I didn't know a magazine could do that.

BREWER: Comes to my set and all he wants to talk about is that phony Soap Weathers! I bet if I stuck a recorder up my ass and played Hot Cross Buns, those leeches at Cream and Whistle Records would be on me like shitty bumper stickers on a folk singer's car.

COSMO: Hot crossed buns... I haven't done a song about that yet. I mean I had that one about cinnamon rolls that I wrote for my girlfriend. But it's different enough.

BREWER: This is the shittiest day of my LIFE. How come every other folk singer in this two-bit shit hole writes TRASH, and my stuff is so GOOD and no one CARES!

COSMO: Well, that guy did just interview you for an extensive profile in a popular magazine.

BREWER: What? That old clod and his shitty rag of lies? If I wanted to see my name on a rag, I would ask a mechanic to write my name on a rag while he's changing my oil. Which I would never do!

COSMO: Listen, easy, easy, relax, alright? I know what you need. We're two guys, young guys, no families or nothing. Just unhinged, wild, young guys, you know, doing whatever they want in a way that is completely reckless and, frankly, dangerous? What I'm saying is, would you wanna share a banana split?

BREWER: Fuck food. I need LIQUOR. Cookie! Make me a suicide of every liquor you got. It's like a Super Long Island. I call it... A Times Square. 'Cause after you have one, you drop like the ball on New Years.

COOKIE: Coming right up. One of everything. The outside of the glass might be a little greasy from the hamburger meat. I used the glass to roll out the patties.

BREWER: Well maybe you could use the Warbler's Trestler to clean it.

COOKIE: Right. Because I heard you say earlier that it is a rag.

BREWER: Would you all shut up about that old rag? What is this place? A damn... Ragtime... Music bar?

COSMO: You keep bringing it up Brewer, not us! Honest!

COOKIE: I feel like, since you are upset, you're just seeking out conflict on purpose!

BREWER: Sorry, Cookie, I just... you know, my day's been bad from the jump. My car started today and it's just been downhill since. I keep finding all these filthy fucking dollars, great parking spots everywhere. None of this is... inspiring, you know? I hate my life and nobody knows what it's like to be me. Is this my life, you know? Just a constant stream of fast women and filthy dollars?

COSMO: Fast women? You been meeting women at a track meet?

BREWER: It's an expression. But yes. They're all fit and have great taste in music.

COOKIE: Hey Brewer! You dropped this dollar!

BREWER: You think I have space in my wallet for a fucking single? 20s ONLY.

COSMO: You want a ride home, Brewer?

BREWER: No thanks. I'm just gonna wander around and wallow till I pass out, in the dark of night, just making people uneasy, roaming the unlit streets, prowling really, saying dark and prophetic things to myself. Shambling. I'm going to shamble.

COSMO: Alright Brewer. Have fun at rock bottom.

BREWER: I'd be lucky to find rock bottom. Probably wake up on a big pile of dollars or something. I'm going to freak out and start smashing bottles everywhere. Going to find a payphone and call every woman who has ever shown me kindness and tell them to FUCK OFF!

COOKIE: Alright. See you tomorrow Brewer.

[door chime]

NARRATOR: So Brewer Grouse shuffles on into the night like a living ghost haunting Manhattan. The dim bulbs of the streetlights look like flickering halos for a lost soul. He thinks this, and multiple other college-freshman level poetic thoughts, as he presses his red face against the window of a four-star steakhouse, where a portly man in a blue suit and a tiny tie is being fed steak by two four-star women on either side of him. It was the most incredible thing Brewer had ever seen. He kept repeating the phrase "blue suit" to himself as he slipped further into the numbing embrace of a liquor-glazed blackout and washed up like flotsam onto the marble beaches of a JP Morgan bank lobby.

BANKER [w/reverb]: Excuse me, Mr. Grouse? Mr. Grouse? Are you awake? Are you OK, Mr. Grouse?

BREWER: Huh?? Whu—yeah, yeah, yeah.

BANKER: Fancy running into you! I've been looking all over for you. I still need to settle up after you played at my divorce settlement party.

BREWER: Where am I—oh. Sure, sure, pay me. Who are you again?

BANKER: Mr. Stanislav Goldbars. You know, the JP Morgan CEO? I was the guy whose wife was divorcing him because, despite my name, I ironically have no gold bars.

BREWER: But you got money to pay ME, right?

BANKER: Well. I don't have any cash either. Do you take diamonds?

BREWER: Oh you mean a girl's best friend? What do I look like to you? A girl?

BANKER: You look like a Dickensian orphan who got hit by a truck made of whiskey. Plus, you're lying here on the floor of a bank and your dick is a little bit out. Take it or leave it pal.

BREWER: Fine. I'll take the stupid diamonds. Bag 'em up for me. Maybe I'll feed 'em to some ducks in Central Park. Or turn them into a big knife I can cut my head off with.

BANKER: Excellent! Well anyway, I'm off to meet with Soap Weathers about playing at my teenage son's bacchanal. Is Soap a friend of yours by chance?

BREWER: Yeah, he's a friend of sorts. You know. Can you do Soap a favor for me when you see him? Can you stick a big sword into his throat and pull all the way down for me? Could you do that? Could you split open his sweet guts for me? Could ya? And could you kick all his nasty guts and gizzards into the sewer and then go down into the sewer and pee on his guts for me? Could you do that?

BANKER: Heh. Folk musicians. Where do they come up with this stuff? See you around Brewer!

BREWER: You and everyone you've ever met is a pussy. I'm leaving.

NARRATOR: Brewer spends the afternoon strolling through Manhattan's famous Wall Street district, whipping diamonds at school buses. He walks past a newspaper stand, too busy staring down at his shuffling feet to notice the latest issue of The Warbler's Trestle, with the headline "Folk Sensation Brewer Grouse: I Never Change My Oil." Finally, he makes it back to his car, still parked outside The Gaslight Grill on Beaver Street. He walks up and knocks the side-view mirror clean off with a swift kick.

BREWER: Fuck. I told my sister I'd stop by today. Let's see if this piece of shit car will even start.

[car starting sfx]

BREWER: FUCK!!!!

NARRATOR: Brewer punches his steering wheel so hard the ensuing honk causes hundreds of pigeons to disperse. The loud noise permanently damages their hearing and sense of

equilibrium and they never find their way back to this neighborhood they grew up in ever again. Brewer's car pulls up in front of a bustling home shaped like a big shoe, children running around everywhere. Brewer gets out of his car and deliberately closes the door on the seatbelt. He keys his car as he walks up to the front door.

[knock knock knock, door open sfx]

TIPPER: Look what the cat dragged in. Come inside. Brush a few babies off a chair and have a seat. I got a soup going. Got a stew going. About to make a chowder. And I got a gigantic wooden spoon with your name on it. Come in, come in.

[door creaks, baby sfx ongoing inside]

TIPPER: I'd give you a longer hug, but I got my hands full at the moment. Here, hold on to this one. This is your new nephew. Bill or Timmy or something. So what's it going to be? Stew? Chowder? Italian Wedding? If you stick around for another hour, I'll have a Cassoulet—

BREWER: Dealers choice. I can pay.

NARRATOR: Brewer throws a gigantic sack of diamonds onto the kitchen table.

TIPPER: Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Brewer! Did you rob a bank?

BREWER: Nah. Just played a gig.

TIPPER: Diamonds? Who's paying you in diamonds? ...Don't you play an acoustic guitar?

BREWER: Some stupid banker. That's all he had. There's like 10 burlap sacks of cash in the trunk of my car too. It's all yours.

TIPPER: All that money for strumming a few songs!

BREWER: You don't pay an acoustic guitar guy to play. You pay him to leave.

TIPPER: That money will go a long way around here. Things have been hard these days. Been cooking a little more rock soup lately, if you get my drift. We had the Gerber scouts come through—they were thinking about Little Baby Boo Boo for their March lentils campaign—but, once again, his radical political views scared them off.

BREWER: I'm going to step outside and get your money out of my shitty car. I can tell this is a bad neighborhood because your house is a shoe.

TIPPER: Jimmy Jims! Sockboy! Little Greggy! Go fetch those bags out of your uncle's trunk.

BREWER: I can do it. Aren't they like 8 months old?

TIPPER: Gotta learn sometime. Little Baby Boo Boo, can you run to the store and grab mama a pack of cigarettes?

LITTLE BABY BOO BOO: Aiought.

TIPPER: Don't give me that lip, Little Baby Boo Boo!

BREWER: You know. All these stupid bankers love me so much and give me sooooo much money. But, I don't know, I'm just so sick of being an unappreciated folk music artist at the right time and place during an important moment of cultural history. People just don't GET IT. They don't get ME. They don't understand why America needs to declare a brutal and unrelenting war on the little known country of Christmas Island. Why can't people hate all the stuff that I hate and like all the stuff that I like? Is that so hard? Am I such a bad guy?

TIPPER: Oh Brewer, honey, I feel for you. I know it's really hard being so creative, you have all this responsibility to be this sensitive, vulnerable canary in the coal mines. You have this responsibility to be the voice of something people don't even know they identify with yet. It's a lot to handle. A lot more than my dozens of children.

BREWER: Wish I could just sit at home all day, cooking soups for babies. But you know sis—this is my calling. My curse.

TIPPER: It's your gift. And you're great at it. You know that mom and dad would be proud.

BREWER: Mom might be proud. Too bad she's six feet under with the worms eating her butt and brains. But dad? You know dad never wanted me to live like this.

TIPPER: Brewer, he only said that you should work at the circus because of what a big clown you are. I don't think that's an insult. Was he insulting you? Is calling someone a clown an insult?

BREWER: I think I'll take you up on that rock soup. Where are the bowls at?

TIPPER: No bowls, but I'll fill up a shoe for you. Go grab one from the mudroom and I'll top you off.

[phone ring sfx]

TIPPER: Hello. You've reached the shoe of Tipper Grouse. May I ask who's calling? [pause] It's for you, Brewer.

BREWER: This better be good.

COSMO: Hey, do you have your car with you? You know—the one you're always ramming into hot dog carts and flipping upside down on purpose?

BREWER: Yeeeeeah I got that stupid piece of junk. If my car was a guy, I'd kill him. Who wants to know?

COSMO: It's me. Your best friend? Cosmo Crease? I need a ride to Shy Jock Studios. I booked a gig as a session musician in Selma Jones' backing band, The Bones, and I got no way to get there on time.

BREWER: Aaaaalright I'll see if the old piece of shit still starts up. Might lift my spirits to get in the studio and silently judge all the Mickey Mouse-ass musicians for being less creative and culturally significant than me.

COSMO: You're the best, Brewer! I'll be at the corner of Mets Avenue and Hamburger Lane. I'll be the guy standing around holding my loose pants up with one hand and also I'm going to drop my pants on the ground when I let go to scratch my nose.

[phone hang up sfx]

BREWER: Tipper, I'm gonna have to take that shoe to go. Cosmo needs me at the studio.

TIPPER: Have fun out there, Brewer! I love you unconditionally! You are a unique and important voice in these crazy changing times!

NARRATOR: Brewer climbs to the top of the shoe, re-ties the laces behind him, and slides down the tongue. He walks up to his car and snaps off the hood ornament.

BREWER: Cheap fucking junk. Even Little Baby Boo Boo could snap this thing off.

NARRATOR: As he walks around the car, he fidgets for some coins in his pockets and whips them at the side of the car. He stares at the car, unmoving, for about ten seconds, then gets in and drives away. He pulls up and sees Cosmo talking to a group of the most beautiful women he's ever seen.

COSMO: What you're thinking of, ma'am, is a patty melt. That changes the dynamic from grilled cheese by a lot, actually. It's actually pretty ignorant of you to say that. Hang on. Yoooo Brewer.

BREWER: Hey ladies, any of you want to key my car?

WOMAN: Ew. Is your car shitty on purpose in order to prove some sort of vague point only to yourself?

BREWER: Yih.

WOMAN: Cool. Are you a folk singer like Cosmo here? Just singing some songs some old dead guys wrote about a farm or a gremlin or whatever?

BREWER: No. I make good songs. About themes and motifs. Now scam. I mean scam. Me and Cosmo got business at the studio.

COSMO: Gotta go, ladies, duty calls. But I'll be around. You know that restaurant where all those guys died from food poisoning multiple times in separate incidents? Not to brag, but I spend a lot of time there. It's called the Pickled Pigeon.

NARRATOR: After driving less than half a block to the studio, Brewer and Cosmo are let into the control room by a man with an open Hawaiian shirt and rose-tinted glasses on the tip of his nose.

GUNDAM: The name's Gundam Rask. And I don't make records. I make dreams. In the form of musical statements. That win Grammys. They did a profile of me in Cat Fancy Magazine. It was mostly about my cat, Paul MeowCartney, but I thought of his name.

COSMO: Whoa! Pretty cool thing to say. I'm just a backing band guy. You don't have to say the cool stuff to me. You don't have to talk to me if you don't want to. You seem pretty important and cool. I have a lot of confidence normally, but I just feel like you're cool and I'm beneath you.

BREWER: Cosmo. He's not that cool.

COSMO: Look at him. Listen to what he just said. That was pretty cool.

BREWER: No way. That was probably a prepared statement he had ready and says to everyone when they walk in. Look, I'll just ask him. Are you cool?

GUNDAM: I can tell you this. My records aren't cool. They're warm. Some of the warmest vinyl you've ever seen or heard in your life. Put your hand on it. Stick a meat thermometer in it. Put it on your kid's forehead when he's sick. It's that warm.

BREWER: Oh? "Warm vinyl"? That's original. I'm trying to get my vinyl to sound lukewarm. You know—like tepid? You'll probably understand about 10 years from now.

GUNDAM [calm agitation]: OK dickhead, I don't see you on the call sheet here... what's your name, man?

BREWER: Brewer Grouse. I'm not here to play. My plan was, when you guys start playing music, I was going to go into the bathroom and take the toilet apart.

GUNDAM: What? Why?

BREWER: 'Cause my mind works like that. I see things different. You see a toilet, I see a bunch of pipes and valves and stuff. By the way, where's your bathroom at?

GUNDAM: I don't want to tell you now.

BREWER: Legally, you have to. Denying a civilian bathroom privileges is a war crime.

GUNDAM: Listen, out of principle, I'm not going to do it. I don't care what happens to me. But there are only five doors in here. One of them is clearly the bathroom.

COSMO: Hey Gundam, where do you want me? Should I hang out in the bathroom too?

GUNDAM: That depends. Ask my engineer, Cobalt Tannins. The guy in the black turtleneck with little black glasses and a beret.

COSMO: The name's Cosmo Crease. Nice to meet you Mr. Tannins. Can I call you Cobalt?

COBALT: Hmpf. You smell like maple syrup and burnt steak.

COSMO: Thank you! My cologne is called "Croque Monseuir"! You smell *exaggerated sniff* like a cold winter's morning in a black and white movie.

COBALT: That is the smell of a vintage 1952 white wine from France's sauvignon region. It's called Skinny Bitch Blanc.

COSMO: *sniffing again* Something else is there... Did you smoke a clove cigarette this morning while sitting on a dirty windowsill?

COBALT: ...Yes.

COSMO: *sniffs again* And were you thinking of... her?

COBALT: I shall speak no more of this. I already set up a mic for you in the live room. Try to play something that isn't... Trite. And please, no insouciance.

COSMO: Just interrupt me if I do anything insouciant. I don't know what that means and I'm walking away already so you can't explain it.

[door close sfx]

COSMO: Hey Selma! Good to see you again!

SELMA: Hey Cosmo. Your guitar smells delicious.

COSMO: Yeeeeeah I dropped some of Mama Nonna's meatballs in there and can't get 'em without taking the strings off. And I can't take the strings off because my hands are too greasy from the meatballs. Plus I don't know how to restring a guitar. Brewer always buys me a new one when my strings get too old.

SELMA: Who?

COSMO: My friend Brewer Grouse. He's really great at music and no one appreciates his message right now. But we're all pretty sure that history will vindicate him culturally in some way. As you may know, we are living in quite important times which are a-changing.

SELMA: Well I'd like to meet him sometime.

COSMO: Oh he's here. He's in the bathroom destroying the toilet. I don't mean that in like, a taking shit kind of way. He's actually wrecking it. I saw him go in there with a big wrench.

SELMA: Well, if he wants to get in a little work today, we could use a fifth acoustic guitarist. If he doesn't want to do that, he could always join my Cool Guys.

NARRATOR: Just then, about 10 to 15 cool guys burst into the studio wearing leather and stuff... Sunglasses... You know? Cool guys. Lots of different types of guys just sort of lounging around in different types of jeans and corduroy pants, t-shirts. These cool guys immediately start giving everyone high fives and they start smoking indoors. Drinking wine. Reading poetry. Stuff like that. You know these types of guys. Handsome, but in an ugly way. Smart, but in a dumb way. Too late for Rebel Without A Cause, too early for Lou Reed. These are the men that made HPV as we know it today.

COSMO: Wow. Cool guys!

SELMA: I like to have a surplus of cool guys around when we record so that it's really hard to focus on the music. They are basically like cats if cats smoked, drank, and never had money to pay for anything. Always going around begging for money and sex.

COSMO: I get what you mean. When I record my songs, I put a cheeseburger on a stool in front of me so I can sing to it. I always sing best when singing to food. One time, I sang the song 'Earth Angel' to a bowl of chili so hard that I cried.

SELMA: Far out. My parents were devout academic Communists. We weren't allowed to have cheeseburgers because they were too hierarchical. You know, the cheese on top of the patty. The pickles and onions atop the cheese. Basically we could only eat meals where the ingredients were laid out horizontally.

COSMO: Yummy!

SELMA: They wouldn't let me do much as a kid. When all the other girls got cigarettes at 12, I wasn't allowed. I was stuck on Soviet-made cigars till I was 16. You can imagine what all the other girls said in the high school bathroom.

COSMO: That must have been tough. I had my first cigarette when I was 9. I didn't start smoking them until I was 18, though. I'd just put it in my lips and—well, I guess I just would get impatient and suck it down my throat right then and there.

SELMA: If my parents even saw me with a cigarette, they'd freak. My parents are very strict, and very communist. They're friends with Che Guevara. He sent them an autographed t-shirt with his face on it. Every time I would try to bring a boy over, they'd grill him on dialectical materialism and tell him he was wearing his beret wrong and scare him away. That's why I knew I had to get out of there. Now that I'm a folk singer, I can bring a bus load of cool guys wherever I want, and they don't have to answer a single question about whether they support planned economies or if they wear condoms.

COSMO: Communist, huh? So no Christmas? No Halloween?

SELMA: Don't even get me started on Halloween. As stern academics, there's nothing my parents hated more than pranks. While all the other girls were out TP'ing statues, egging the elderly, and torching cars, I was shut in my bedroom doing my mandatory reading. Of course, my parents thought I was reading Marx's Kapital, but I had a copy of Skeleton Magazine inside it.

COSMO: You read Skeleton Magazine? Do you remember that one skeleton named..... Cody Winthrop, Jr.?

SELMA: Of course! If my parents saw that centerfold they'd flip.

COSMO: You could see everything! Even what he had for lunch.

SELMA: I guess that's where my fascination with Halloween started.

COSMO: And my obsession with lunch. I'll always remember Cody Winthrop Jr, the famous skeleton. He had a reuben for lunch. His ribcage was covered in thousand island dressing.

SELMA: Spooky. My music is more focused on the Halloween stuff than the food stuff. But it's nice that you discovered your niche too.

COSMO: You know, I wrote a Halloween song once. It was called Christmas Candy. I didn't quite crack that chestnut, lyrically. In fact there was no candy in the song. It was about chestnuts roasting on some kind of fire.

COBALT: Cosmo—It's Cobalt here, in the control room. We're getting what sounds like a weird rolling sound inside your guitar when you move. It sounds like there's a bunch of mice inside your guitar or something.

COSMO: I don't know what you're talking about, sir.

COBALT: Yes you do. I know there's meatballs in your guitar, I was just trying to be polite. A good engineer can instantly identify the sound of meatballs in a guitar. But you doubled down and lied to me. So, I guess what I'm telling you is, take the meatballs out of your guitar.

COSMO: You can just take those out in post. Also, I'm going to play a lot of wrong chords that you can also take out in post.

COBALT: Selma, real quick, can you hit Cosmo for me, preferably in the head or genitals or some other sort of visible weak spot?

SELMA: Sorry, can't do that Cobalt. Would freak out all of my lazy cool guys and ruin the vibe.

COBALT: Understood. Let me just check the monitors here.

[intense squealing feedback]

[COSMO and SELMA scream out in pain]

COBALT: Everything's good. I'm done.

GUNDAM: We're rolling. And remember Selma, you're a star. This is going to be your big break. You should get your hopes super high. Hope you can deliver under insurmountable pressure. The label needs a hit Selma.

[SELMA plays her song]

NARRATOR: As the song ends, Brewer steps out of the bathroom and a bunch of toilet parts fall out of the room behind him. He walks back into the control room and sees Gundam and Cobalt.

GUNDAM: Thoughts?

COBALT: Hmm, perhaps releasing a Halloween single in February is not the right play.

GUNDAM (over the loudspeaker): That was great Selma, great take. Listen, can we get another one? This time, can you play your instruments and sing better?

COSMO [meekly]: No.

SELMA: I think I could play better but it's sort of subjective.

COBALT: It's not.

GUNDAM: Alright, Cobalt, stay here. I got to go have a chat with our friend Brewer Grouse over here.

BREWER: The toilet was like that when I got here.

GUNDAM: No it wasn't. You're still holding the wrench. I'll send you a bill. But listen. We've got a situation on our hands. I think I may have overestimated Halloween's aesthetic staying power over the course of a year. We need a new angle on this single, quick. And most of these guys here are just replacement-level Greenwich Village man meat. We need a *songwriter*, stat.

BREWER: If you need a songwriter why the FUCK would you ask a folk singer. I'm sure Tin Pan Alley could write you a song called "I Want a Girl Just Like My Mommy" or "Mean Ol' Tabby Cat Stuck In a Tree."

GUNDAM: Listen, I'll be blunt with you. Sure, in the future, there's going to be tons of genres of music. Screw Metal, Popstep, Rasta Rap, Hard Soft Rock. But nowadays? We got Folk, we got Polka, and we got whatever the black guys are doing. Folk may not be any good, no one may like it, but you're the only shot I got.

BREWER: You want me to write songs for her, man? About what? Halloween? It's the Early '60s, if a Halloween song was gonna be a hit, it would've happened by now. Lemme guess. You want me to start rhyming night with sight? Mash with smash? Am I supposed to imagine what a Halloween party attended by all of history's spookiest A-Lister would be like? Maybe Dracula could have some kind of dance called the Transylvania Twist. I'm sure you Manhattan phonies would eat it up. But guess what? It'll never work. There will never be a popular song about a ball, bash, or mash attended by monsters.

GUNDAM: Yeah, I know. That's why we need a new angle. She just sings about the prince of darkness so much and it's really pissing me off. Listen, Halloween is vaguely Satanic and sort of decadent. That's why she's so into it. It's some weird grudge against her professorial Communist parents who I guess wrote 5,000 words in some academic journal about how Halloween candy is the opiate of the masses—at least from age 5 to 14. But we need to scrap this Halloween shit entirely. Look. We have one more day of studio time tomorrow. Think you can come back with a hit?

BREWER: Look. I'm not doing this to get my mug on the cover of Cat Fancy Magazine petting some half-wit tabby whose name's a bad pun. Like Cat Stevens. That's not even a pun. But you get the idea. I'm not in this for some flash-in-the-pan magazine cover fame. I'm in this to be

famous in 100 years. In 1,000 years. I want to be remembered forever like Al Jolson or Agamemnon. So yeah. I'll write your little "song." I'll even make it a hit. For a price.

GUNDAM: How about we call it even for the toilet?

BREWER: Fine. But I'm keeping the wrench.

GUNDAM: Deal. You drive a hard bargain Brewer.

BREWER: I don't give a shit about anything. Anyway, see you tomorrow. Gotta go get loaded to forget all my bullshit and pain. It's whiskey fishbowl night at the gaslight grill. \$5 bucks for 45 shots of Old Crow with a real goldfish swimming in it.

GUNDAM: Why are you telling me what you're about to do? Why would you—

NARRATOR: Brewer walks into the Gaslight Grill and slams the door so hard some of the screws fall out.

COOKIE: Hey Brewer. Rough day?

BREWER: Yeah, like always. Oh, hey look! A dollar!

COOKIE: Your sister is here. She's got a table near the stage, waiting for Cosmo to go on. Hey man—who's that tiny guy she's with?

BREWER: Oh, that's Little Baby Boo Boo. He's not a guy, he's a baby. He's only 1, but he's already bullying the other kids at a 3rd grade level.

COOKIE: Oh I just thought bonnets and pacifiers were coming back in style. Probably shouldn't've served him that 20 ounce Bud Heavy.

BREWER: Cookie, we could all use a 20 ounce Bud Heavy. With all the bullshit nowadays.

TIPPER: Hey brother! I wish you were performing tonight! I'm so proud of you!

BREWER: You're going to have to settle for Cosmo. He's probably going to sing about a burger or a plum or something. Hey, I heard Little Baby Boo Boo's here?

LITTLE BABY BOO BOO: Yoooo.

TIPPER: Yeah, he's been fussy all day. I actually brought all my kids. Folk music helps them sleep. Say Brewer, you got any cash on you? I could go for a beer right now.

COOKIE: One beer coming up!

BREWER: Here. This is all I got, Cookie.

NARRATOR: Brewer rolls a diamond out of his pocket and it hits the bartop with a thunk. Cookie picks it up, eyes it, and gives Brewer three smaller diamonds as change.

TIPPER: Thanks. It's nice to get out of the shoe every once in a while. I guess I shouldn't complain. I got all my babies to keep me company—all you have are your songs.

BREWER: My songs don't need me like Little Baby Boo Boo needs you. My songs don't ask me to change them. My guitar doesn't need to be burped, although Cosmo has tried. It's such a lonely life telling the truth when no one cares and everyone loves lies so much that they hate me for being such a living example of the truth.

TIPPER: I'm sorry, Brewer. Being a folk musician is so hard. In the Warbler's Trestle's List of 100 Hardest Professions, it was #1. Single mother didn't even crack the top 20. Your job is so tough, it makes single mothers look like government workers. Sometimes, I have enough free time in my day to listen to up to 5 songs.

BREWER: Being a folk musician is like waking up every day and having a man with no face put his gun in your mouth. But it's worth it because you get to hang out all the time in dirty places with no ventilation and you get to drink room temperature brown liquids whenever you want.

TIPPER: Being a single mother is like waking up every day and it's Christmas and Santa is there and he's so proud of you because you have sooooo many presents and when you open every single present a beam of light shoots out of it straight into your soul and makes you feel good. But mostly it's about making big cauldrons of soup all the time.

BREWER: Sis, shut up about being a single mother for just a second. Cosmo's on!

[COSMO PLAYS HIS SONG]

BREWER: NEXT! Bunch of bullshit. Not realistic at all.

SOAP: Incredible, I can practically taste the chicken cacciatore! Such inspired songwriting. The decision to leave a little ketchup on his pickguard was artistically sound and mirrored the thematic content of the music. Don't even get me started on the motifs!

BREWER: Soap Weathers? Didn't see you come in. Shouldn't you be at a student center playing your palatable shlock-folk for the disaffected, emotionally stunted upper-middle-class youth of our nation's elite nurseries—I mean, universities?

SOAP: Brewer Grouse. Shouldn't you be at a thousand-dollar-a-plate JP Morgan black-tie fundraiser that gives out free Diners Club cards to underprivileged CEOs and their qualifying mistresses?

BREWER: That event was last night, Soap. But I wouldn't expect you to know that. You don't know your way around high society any better than you know your way around the fretboard. Still writing all your songs in C Major?

SOAP: Well I SEE a MAJOR opportunity to reach our nation's young people. Today's youth counterculture wants to be reminded of the simpler times they were born into... You know, the '40s? Things were just better then. Primary colors. Circles, squares, triangles, numbers, letters. They wanna go back to preschool. Songs about blocks, trucks, and guys. Washing your hands. Knowing the muffin man. That's the future of folk. It's the future of America. That's why I turned down the Wall Street Executive's Union Ball.

BREWER: YOU turned down the Wall Street Executive's Union Ball?!?!? Skeener Kremit played that gig last year and made a killing. He bought so many slot machines he turned his home into a damn casino. And nobody got to play the slots but him.

SOAP: That life's not for me, man. I only take money from Main Street. My music isn't for the boardroom, it's for the dorm room. I'm making music for the legacy admissions at Columbia. NYU undergrads whose parents bought them Manhattan Brownstones so they could study more better. Hell, I'm even doing it for the kids at SUNY-Yonkers who grew up with NOTHING and dream of becoming slumlords of their own.

BREWER: You know who I do it for? ME. M-E. Numero uno. That's what I call myself when I stare in the mirror late at night when I'm really drunk. I know what's good. I know what sounds good. I'm the King of New York.

SOAP: I'm just a guy who knows that the ABCs are fun, trucks go vroom, and there's an ineffable beauty latent in the chaotic act of knocking over a tower of blocks.

BREWER: If I had a dollar for every time I heard that old line.

SOAP: I have a dollar. Wait, nope. Must have dropped it.

BREWER: If you had a dollar you wouldn't know what to do with it. Sellout. We play real-ass Folk music here. Why don't you take your little baby ass out of here and go find some more gimmicks? Maybe you could put on, oh, I don't know, a big purple dinosaur suit or something when you play your little weenie songs for cross-eyed undergrads with soft hands and hairy feet? How about I fucking KILL you?

COOKIE: Everyone shut up, the president's making an announcement on live TV. He's about to start talking right... now.

PRESIDENT: Good evening America. It's me. You know. The big man. I just wanted to give you an update about our nation's preparedness for war. The following is a list of countries we are NOT at war with. Germany. France. It's non-alphabetical. I'm kind of just saying them as I think of them. Algeria. Botswana. Oman.

BREWER: Did he say Christmas Island yet? Can everyone shut the fuck up? Did he say Christmas Island?

PRESIDENT: Christmas Island. Jamaica. East Timor.

BREWER: FUCK! I can't believe we're going to let those fuckers get away with it!

SOAP: Get away with what?

BREWER: There's a little company called United Pineapple of Delaware. Sure, it may be a small local concern. But they're good folks. And they're down there in Christmas Island trying to take back the island's plentiful natural resources for GOOD, wholesome people like *US*. You know—Americans? It makes me sick to my stomach that the good folks of U.P. Delaware are being oppressed by the unruly citizens of that god forsaken wasteland. You hear that, Soap? Sorry I'm not sorry. I will always fight for United Pineapple of Delaware in their struggle against the good people of Christmas Island and their democratically elected president.

SOAP: But democracy is foundational to a healthy, durable nation-state.

BREWER: For *us*, yeah. Not for them. They haven't earned the privilege. They're obviously not using democracy correctly if United Pineapple of Delaware is having such a hard time getting a foothold in the lucrative Christmas Island market.

SOAP: So... You DON'T want them to have democracy?

BREWER: They haven't earned their stripes. They need to take their lumps. That's the problem with islands these days. No one who lives on them wants to work hard.

SOAP: Heck I wouldn't say no to a lei, some rays, and a margarita on *la playa*.

BREWER: You don't fucking GET it! I'm DONE. I'm DONE with you. You can tell that I'm mad and you're acting like you don't care. I'm getting out of here.

NARRATOR: Brewer stomps over towards a table of avid folk fans. He pulls a hammer out of his coat pocket and hits a table leg so hard that it goes flying across the room and the table collapses, spilling all of their drinks all over the floor.

BREWER: Sorry, but it needed to be done. You can put those on my tab. Under Cosmo Crease.

TIPPER: Looks like your conversation with Soap Weathers got a little heated. You okay?

BREWER: I Need. To Fucking. LOSE IT! I am going to go CRAZY on PURPOSE. I am so SICK of a few minor things in my life not going exactly how I want and I am going to explode like a nuclear fucking bomb.

TIPPER: Aww. Awww. Well, have fun. And be safe!

BREWER: Get the fuck out of here. I don't want Little Baby Boo Boo to see me like this.

NARRATOR: Brewer Grouse starts sprinting towards the front door of the Gaslight Grill. He dives headfirst and headbutts it open. He spills out into the street like a bag of dumb garbage and he rolls around on the sidewalk thrashing for about thirty seconds. He picks up a dollar and runs off, disappearing into a sewer grate. An hour later, Brewer is at a cockfight, trying to light up a churro like it's a cigar. After that, a Wall St. CEO's nephew's bar mitzvah, where he's trying to force a 12-year-old to make him an old fashioned. Later on, he's in an enclosure in the Bronx Zoo, brown-bagging it with an orangutan. Snow begins to fall sometime after 4 AM, as Brewer walks past an upscale cocktail lounge, and he sees the man in the blue suit—the very same he saw earlier—walk out of the lounge with two beautiful women while he is caressing a diamond. Brewer stares in a drunken stupor as the man in the blue suit kisses his beautiful wife. Then he kisses the other woman. And then the two women kiss.

BREWER: Damn, he's got it aaaall figured out.

NARRATOR: Brewer stumbles into a bodega and buys a banana and a giant bag of sugar. Like 50 pounds of it. He walks back to his car near The Gaslight Grill and pops open the gas tank cover and dumps in sugar till it overflows. He takes the banana and shoves it in his muffler. He uses the back end of the hammer from earlier to puncture all his tires, then whips the hammer at the windshield.

BREWER: It's all bullshit. Too bad no one else sees that.

NARRATOR: Brewer reaches into his pocket and pulls out a bumper sticker that says "my other car is a Martin 12-String." He pulls off the adhesive and slaps it onto the bumper. Then he gets into the driver's seat, turns on the car to raise the antenna, then snaps it off. He pops the hood and starts pulling on the engine, trying to grab anything he can. He snaps a cable or two. He pulls out a bottle of Colonel Yevgeny Molotov's Extra Flammable Vodka from the trunk of the car. Pulling out the cork and spitting it at some pigeons, he douses the whole vehicle and lights it with a lighter from Gore Vidal's I Love This Bar & Grill. Finally satiated and enticed by the warmth of lapping flames, he crawls underneath the vehicle to get a good night's sleep.

[NYSE bell ringing sfx]

BREWER: Fuck. I'm late. The New York Stock Exchange Bell just tolled 11 times. It's almost noon! I gotta get to the studio... And take apart their sink!

NARRATOR: Brewer stands straight up from under the car, because the floor has melted. It's basically just a skeletal metal frame on wheels. He inserts the key in the ignition and the engine purrs.

BREWER: FUCK! Nothing EVER works out how I want it to!

NARRATOR: Dejected, he drives to the studio, and his feet keep falling through the bottom like Fred Flintstone. In the summertime, this is how he trims his toenails.

[door opening sfx]

BREWER: FUUCK!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

GUNDAM: Oh hey Brewer. Didn't see you come in. You know, Soap Weathers was just in here. Fixed the toilet and everything. Nice guy.

BREWER: Lousy piece of shit. Whatever. What do you PHONIES want me to play for you? The star spangled banner? Some cowboy ballad about a crosseyed gunslinger? A dance song with very vague dance instructions?

GUNDAM: Au contraire. This will be a duet with you and Selma. So it needs a romantic angle.

BREWER: Fine. But I'm incapable of empathy for women. So it's not gonna be easy.

GUNDAM: Oh come on. The Beach Boys write most of their songs on the elevator up here. Writing a song is easy.

BREWER: No, writing a HIT song is easy. Writing a REAL song that nobody likes or understands is the hardest and bravest endeavor one can undertake.

GUNDAM: Aight. Well, we need a HIT song. So get to it. Cobalt and Selma are in the studio waiting.

[door closing sfx]

COBALT: Alright Selma, one more time.

SELMA: And on this farm he had a... Fuck. I'm trying to think of a farm animal that's not cliché. Alpaca? Is that too regional?

COBALT: My uncle keeps emus on his farm.

SELMA: Domestic guineafowl. Edible-nest swiftlet. Red-legged seriema.

BREWER: What the hell are you prattling on about? This better not be some baby bullshit like Soap Weathers does.

SELMA: Nah, we're working on a folk song about the farmsteading life.

BREWER: Don't care. Boring! Let's write this stupid #1 song so I can hit the bottle and pass out for 20 hours.

GUNDAM: Hitting the bottle and sleeping 20 hours? Sounds like what babies do.

BREWER: FUCK! YOU'RE RIGHT!

[dish breaking SFX]

COBALT: Hey man, you broke my tiny European sunglasses. I need those in order to stare disapprovingly at people.

[dish breaking SFX]

SELMA: Hey, that's my Martin D-18 StreetLegend® acoustic!

[dish breaking SFX]

GUNDAM: And my plate! That's my only one!

NARRATOR: Brewer slams a bar of gold onto a nearby table.

BREWER: So buy a new one. All of you. Now if we're gonna make a hit song, we're gonna do it my way.

GUNDAM: Well, let's get to the basics of songwriting here. What are some lyrical themes that make you think of romance?

COBALT: Power.

BREWER: Leaving in the middle of the night without telling her goodbye or where you are going or apologizing for anything you ever did and also eating all of her food.

SELMA: Music.

GUNDAM: Now, music. That has legs. But what specifically? You see, it can't just be any old song about music. I'm searching for a SOUND.

SELMA: A sound... Maybe a C?

[Plays a C]

GUNDAM: Nah. That's not it.

SELMA: D?

[Plays a D]

GUNDAM: Nah.

SELMA: E?

[Plays an E]

GUNDAM: Nah. Wait what was that last one?

[Plays an E again]

GUNDAM: Nah. I heard the Nashville sound is good. Where do we find that?

BREWER: You can find that in 1959. This here is the '60s jack. And we're all about a whole new sound that's driving teens—and bankers—crazy. It's called folk. And it's not good but it is important.

GUNDAM: OK well maybe we start with the title. That's usually the first thing the Beach Boys think of, when they're in here.

SELMA: "Drive-In Jamboree"? "Bored in My Ford"? "Jalopy Jangle"? "My Girl Just Got Her CDL"?

COBALT: "Motorcycle Wind"?

GUNDAM: How about "Route 66 (Honk If You're Horny)?"

BREWER: [ssiiiiiggghh] These ideas are going nowhere fast. Just like my fucking car.

GUNDAM: Hmmm. Tell me more about that.

BREWER: It's just that my fucking stupid ass car is all messed up. Won't even hardly go anymore. If I had my way it'd be on cinder blocks. (spits)

SELMA: Gee. I'd never date a loser without a slick set of wheels.

GUNDAM: That's it. A lovelorn fellow who's unlucky in love 'cause he doesn't got a ruby red T-bird to cruise for little chickies with.

COBALT: Wait, back up a second. You wish your car was more messed up?

BREWER: I want a burden. But something I don't have to feed everyday.

GUNDAM: We're getting off track. Let's get back to the T-Bird and chickies stuff.

SELMA: Right. A lovelorn duet about vehicular—and romantic—misfortune. It's called, "My Car Don't Go."

BREWER: OK whatever. Here goes nothing.

[Play the song]

BREWER: Well that was a waste of time. I'm outta here.

[door slam sfx]

[pause]

[door open sfx]

[footsteps sfx]

BREWER: Forgot my guitar.

GUNDAM: Brewer, do you realize what you just did? That was phenomenal. That's a hit.

BREWER: I know. I know it was a hit. It's going to be number 1 for a hundred weeks. Waste of time! Not why I got into music!

SELMA: Now hold on, Brewer. You know, I've been thinking about my parents and their crazy academic Marxism. Maybe they're right about some stuff. Like how working class Joes like us need to stick together.

BREWER: I don't need anybody except myself. And my friend Jack Daniels. And his nephew Coca-Cola. He's been showin' Coke the ropes. Gettin' him in on the action by collaborating on mixed drinks together. Comprende?

SELMA: I see what you mean. Teamwork makes the dream work, to paraphrase Marx. It doesn't matter if it's two beverages or two folk singers.

BREWER: I don't know what you're talking about. I have a kinetic learning style.

SELMA: Brewer. Just hear me out. Basically I think those loopy Marxists were onto something about working together and stuff. But also, I want to make a LOT of money off our song. And I don't want to be taxed.

BREWER: I'm sick of making money. Whenever I play for the bankers, they just give me money as a joke. I have like three trust funds that were all set up for me by drunk guys.

SELMA: Don't just freak out and bail. Play the Wall Street Executive's Union Ball with me. Soap Weathers just backed out, and you'd be the perfect pick. Maybe I could convince you over lunch?

BREWER: OK but you're paying. And we're going to the Gaslight Grill.

SELMA: Do they serve candy? Normally, I only eat candy. But, well. I just changed the subject matter of my music. Maybe I could change my diet too?

BREWER: Don't Care! Not my problem!

SELMA: You know Brewer, if we start hanging out a lot, maybe I'll start changing my personality to be more like yours.

BREWER: You fucking wish! You haven't said anything cool yet! And you're wearing a dress covered in spider webs and the spider webs aren't even real. You're not one of those *phonies* I've been hearing so much about, are you?

SELMA: Yeah. I AM a phony!

BREWER: I'm sick of these FAKE New York phonies, PRETENDING to be phonies, when really they're not phonies at all.

SELMA: What are you talking about?

[dish breaking sfx]

BREWER: Oh look! A dollar!

GUNDAM: Listen, Selma, Brewer, we'll take it from here. I think this is going to be big. Bigger than anything we've ever seen before. Bigger than Christianity would've been if Jesus was born blonde. Bigger than the Catholic Church would be if the Pope was a hot chick. Bigger than even a third thing would be. Like uhhh.... The world's biggest butter churn. If uhhh... Butter tasted more better the more bigger the churn was.

[door chime sfx]

BREWER: Cookie! Six burgers and a knife please! And for my friend here... I dunno, a bat? A bowl of spiders? What do you eat?

SELMA: Just candy for me thanks. Green ones, red ones, blue ones, purple ones, and yellow ones please.

COOKIE [sarcastic]: "Hi Cookie! How are you! How are you feeling?" That's how you talk to people before you just start barking orders at them! But, yeah, I'll get you every single thing you asked for as soon as I finish cooking this burger and kill this rat stuck in my oil bucket.

[rat squeal]

COOKIE: Okay, burgers done. Now to kill the rat.

BREWER: There isn't any time for that, Cookie. Let the rat be. You know, I was once like that rat. Living meal to meal. Putting my feet in your cooking oil. Sneaking into here in the middle of the night, completely nude, gnawing on the burger buns.

COOKIE: You put your feet in the cooking oil? But I slick my hair back with that oil!

SELMA: Maybe the rat was just trying to slick its hair back and it fell in. All of God's creatures have the desire to look cool.

BREWER: Well here's the difference between me and that rat. He can't charge \$5 Gs a day for studio work. You—You think I can bill Gundam Rask \$5,000 for today?

SELMA: Maybe, but he said he was going to bill you for destroying his toilet.

COOKIE: Okay, here's a sopping wet brown paper bag with six hamburgers in it. The knife's at the bottom. And for the young lady, a handful of jelly beans that I fished out of Cosmo's guitar.

SELMA: Damn that's wassup!

BREWER: Thanks for the knife, Cookie. Let's see if this piece of shit table looks any better with my name carved in it.

[knife sfx]

SELMA: Having trouble?

BREWER: What the fuck is this table made of? Is there some sort of new wood made out of rocks? Where's this wood from Cookie?

COOKIE: You don't wanna know Brewer.

BREWER: Don't tell me. Christmas Island?

COOKIE: Christmas Island Pine. Not only the best wood, but the most gorgeous tree. That table was my Christmas tree last year.

BREWER: We should be making trees in America! We don't make nothing in this country anymore.

SELMA: We make folk music.

BREWER: Folk music's not even real music! The Portuguese are eating our lunch with that Fado shit! We're washed!

SELMA: Be that as it may, I need you to focus up, Brewer. I can't have you getting all agitated and upset and going on weird, ethnic rants when we're playing the Executive's Union Ball. Well—they might actually like that.

BREWER: Let me ask you this, Selma. Why should I play your Executive's Union Ball when that time could be better spent laying down in the back seat of my shitty car and trying to kick out my own windows?

SELMA: C'mon Brewer. You know we make a good team. Maybe you just need to relax. I find that candy helps me unwind. Take this. It's jellybeans—mostly.

BREWER: You know what helps me unwind? Getting cracked in the skull by the butt of a pistol.

SELMA: I've tried that too, and it doesn't work as good as my method. Just take these.

BREWER: So this is just a bunch of jellybeans?

SELMA: Yeah. On an unrelated note, did you know they make jellybean-shaped Valiums now?

BREWER: No.

SELMA: Good.

BREWER: What flavor are these?

SELMA: Pill flavored. I think the pill-flavored jellybeans are like a cross promotion with the jellybean-shaped pills.

[eating sfx]

BREWER: Hmmm. I don't feel too different yet. If I'm lucky, maybe this stuff'll kill me.

SELMA: Don't die yet! People are gonna love you when they hear our song.

BREWER: I want to be *hated* now, and revered when I'm DEAD!

SELMA: I don't really think a lot about death. In fact I don't plan on dying.

BREWER: Everyone dies. And everyone looks fucking ugly when they do it.

SELMA: Nah. I got a plan. You know Dracula?

BREWER: Giuseppe Dracula, the guy who works at the auto repair shop on Beaver Street?

SELMA: What? No. I mean COUNT Dracula. Fangs. Cape. Pale skin. ...You know a different Dracula?

BREWER: Yeah. The neighborhood I'm from, there's like 10 Draculas. Giuseppe. Michelangelo. Lorenzo Dracula. Big name in the Italian-American community.

SELMA: You're from an Italian-American neighborhood?

BREWER: Yeah, my dad was Irish though. He just really liked getting his ass kicked.

SELMA: That explains some things. But I don't mean those Draculas. I mean the main Dracula. You know, the undying one? And I, like him, am seeking immortality.

BREWER: And how do you imagine you're going to do that?

SELMA: Hear me out. These ancient, immortal beings, like Dracula, you know what they're really motivated by? Cold, hard cash. Have you seen the size of his castle? Takes like a hundred guys to clean and manage that much acreage. And Dracula doesn't want to get a job, he's Dracula. He doesn't have any papers. ID. Driver's license. Can't get a bank account. He does not have a social security number. This is a man who is strapped for cash at all times. You know what costs money? Castles. Satin cloaks. Coffins. So I figure I could be like his sugar

mama or whatever, with all this folk-song money, and he could bite my butt or whatever to turn me into a vampire and then I could be immortal and never have to face the grim specter of death that looms resolute over all mortal souls.

BREWER: Are you doing a bit? Is this real? Are you sure vampires even exist? I thought you were just sort of pretending to believe in them because you liked Halloween so much.

SELMA: Of course they exist. All those crazy Halloween critters you know and love, they're all real. They're fucking real. [Pounds table] *I saw a Frankenstein at the unemployment office once. I saw a mummy at social services. I saw a whole family of swamp people getting diapers at the Women's Infant and Children Center.*

BREWER: Far out, man. Hey I'm feeling pretty groovy, come to think of it. I think I might be peeing.

SELMA: On purpose or on accident?

BREWER: I don't know! I told you already, I don't care what people think of me while I'm alive.

SELMA: Well I don't care how I'm perceived in death, since I'm never gonna die.

BREWER: Damn. You are way cooler than I thought. OK. I'll do this Executive's Union Ball.

SELMA: You will?!? That's amazing Brewer, I'm so excited! I thought for sure I had freaked you out with the vampire stuff, and the stuff about seeing a Centaur at a AAA baseball game.

BREWER: You didn't tell me that one. A Centaur? Is that really a Halloween thing?

SELMA: No. It's different. I only see Halloween creatures at social service offices. I see fantasy and mythology creatures at minor league sports games.

BREWER: I feel like I should push back on that statement, but I feel pretty good from these jellybeans. I never knew candy could make me feel like a very relaxed god. I guess I like candy now.

SELMA: This candy seems to have calmed you and made you more agreeable.

BREWER: Yes. It has.

SELMA: And I can get you more candy whenever you want.

BREWER: Amazing.

SELMA: But you can only get it from me.

BREWER: Okay.

SELMA: Alright, well, that candy has your eyelids drooping pretty hard so I guess I should get you home.

BREWER: Nah I'm good. I've always wanted to see the Loch Ness Monster. I think I'm gonna hang around at the Veterans Hospital until he shows up.

SELMA: Okay. If he doesn't show up, there's a satyr who always hangs around NYU basketball games. Won't be hard to spot. Stay safe.

NARRATOR: Look up any tourist's guide to Manhattan from the 1950s and you won't find the Gaslight Grill. In fact, if you looked up this spot on a map, there was just a big red X through a cartoon of a child loading a gun. That is, until Brewer Grouse came along. Just as Vespasian built Rome's resplendent Coliseum, Brewer built the Gaslight Grill. Not with mortar. Not with stone. But with six strings, three chords, and the sheer force of his nasty attitude. He turned that pile of decaying bricks and oily rats into a golden monument to white-guy folk music. And how is he repaid? Cursed by God through his lack of suffering...

[Auto repair noises, wrenches or whatever]

BREWER: Stupid American-made piece of junk... Doesn't even break down properly. Just keeps on fucking going...

COSMO: Morning Brewer! What are you doing down there?

BREWER: Cutting my own brake lines.

COSMO: Why would you do that?

BREWER: I replaced my brake pads with a bunch of oily rags and it's still braking too good. I'm done fucking around. Fuck! I hate this car. I would drive it into the sun if I could. Cosmo, could you help me up?

COSMO: Sure thing, Brewer. What you grabbing that bat for?

BREWER: The bases are loaded. Time to hit it outta the car park.

NARRATOR: The orange glow of the New York sunrise backlights the scene as Brewer Grouse steps up to the plate, assumes his stance, and starts bashing the shit out of his own car artlessly. Cosmo watches wearing a dumb guy's smile. The locals on the street don't pay Brewer any mind as he pulls out a can of spray paint and scrawls the word "MAD" on his car so

everyone knows how he's feeling. Brewer steps back and admires his handiwork when a classic-style street-urchin paperboy appears nearby.

PAPERBOY: Extra extra! New folk charts are out! America has a new #1, folks! Brewer Grouse and Selma Jones have struck gold with "My Car Don't Go!" Record Execs say it's as big as the Beatles are going to be—someday!

BREWER: Hey lemme see that.

[swipe sfx]

PAPERBOY: Hey mister! Where's my nickel!

BREWER: Uhh, let's see, what do I got on me... Here's an emerald. I don't know how much it's worth, but it's sure as hell worth more than a crappy rag from an ugly kid.

PAPERBOY: Come on, I know it's a valuable gemstone, but you don't have to call me ugly.

BREWER: You're right. I'm sorry. I've just been really mad at my car lately. I guess your greasy face reminds me of an oil filter. Now get the fuck out of here you grubby raggamuffin.

COSMO: You're coming in pretty hot, Brewer. Are you mad or something?

BREWER: I've been mad my entire life and no one seems to care. And now I gotta deal with having a hit song—Come on, Cosmo. We're going to the Gaslight Grill. I want to get so drunk that I forget how to sing that song forever.

COSMO: You gotta be careful about drinking in the morning Brewer. You can't do it angry. Early baseball game. Boring kid's recital. Pregaming for the Veteran's Day Parade. That's why you drink in the morning.

BREWER: What about spite? What if I started drinking really hard this morning out of a general feeling of spite? Bitterness? Malice? What is malice? Is that like anger but more antiquated?

COSMO: Brewer, I want to tell you something and I want you to listen very carefully. I want you to imagine spite as, well, I don't know, a big spicy pepper. You got to be careful around it. Can't touch your peehole. And then you got bitterness—and that is like a big, yellow onion, all chopped up, making your eyes water, making you cry. And malice is just—uhhh—just a big wad of beans. It's uhh. They are starchy and they are yummy and they are good. And when you get them in a pot together, that's like a, it's a stew. You don't want to stew on your negative emotions. But when they're all bubbling together LIKE a stew? That's good. And you just got to, I guess, add a little beer and let it simmer for a while and all of a sudden, hey, that pepper ain't so spicy no more. Those onions are sweeter. So, uh, basically, you have feelings and they are—

BREWER: Where are you going with this, Cosmo? You lost me at the start, and you got me back a little bit when you said my feelings are a stew, and—

COSMO: Big bowl of beans. Kidney beans or whatever bean you got really.

BREWER: Okay.

COSMO: Feel better? Now let's go to the Gaslight Grill. But first, let's pick up some breakfast beans.

[door chime sfx and music change]

COOKIE: Morning Cosmo! Hey Brewer, you left part of your car in the women's bathroom. I think it's your rearview mirror. You want it back?

BREWER: Busy!

COSMO: Whoa, bad news Brewer. Looks like Soap is playing here today. His audience prefers the early slots. We can get out of here and head somewhere else, if you want. I know this martini bar that puts candy corn in your martini instead of olives.

BREWER: Are you kidding me, Cosmo? I'm a messy bitch and I love to seek out conflict. I'm a real piece of lowdown dirty shit and I am going to embarrass myself in front of that man.

SELMA: Hey Brewer! Hey Cosmo! I'm surprised you guys are here to see Soap Weathers.

COSMO: Howdy Selma! No, that's not why we're here. He wants to get insanely drunk—and me? I like to go to bars and hit on all the food. I spot me a—mmmmmm—little bowl'a potato salad over there, next to a stacked little cheeseburger. [licking lips sfx]. And don't worry, I'll wear protection.

NARRATOR: Cosmo puts on a bib depicting a pig roasting another pig on a spit and they are both smiling.

SELMA: Far out, Cosmo. Did you hear that Brewer? He's horny for food. He talks about it like it's sex. Brewer? ...Brewer?

[microphone squeal sfx]

BREWER: Listen up, LOSERS! This is the last time you'll ever see me in this shithole—unless I'm dying and need somewhere to throw up and leave my rotting corpse. You guys are folk fans, right? You probably saw. I got the #1 song, so everybody has to listen to what I got to say. I don't need you fucking FOLK fans anymore. Normal people are gonna listen to me now. People with air conditioners. People who go see SUCCESSFUL artists in REAL VENUES owned by

banks and airlines and shit. What kind of sick person goes to small, local bars to see talentless local hacks yodeling away? The unemployable? Non-STEM college students? Sexual predators? If you guys wanted to see NOBODIES, you could just look in the mirror. So this is your chance. Take a look at a REAL star. If you wanna know where you can find me from now on, me and Selma just announced that we're playing the Pan-Am Summer Jam at Madison Square Garden. You know, a venue people have actually heard of? There's 10,000 tickets and they're going quick. Yeah. That's 10 times the population of Christmas Island, by the way. A place where I will NEV-ER perform. 'Cause I'm going to use my newfound fame to lobby the government to destroy it with bombs. Also, I don't know how to end this rant, I'm getting pretty unhinged. So I'm uh. I'm going to go sulk in the alley and start smashing loose bottles until a cop aims his service weapon at me. Or bashes my head in. Thanks.

[mild, polite applause]

SOAP: Uhh... Hey everybody... I'm Soap Weathers. This one's called "The Sun's Birthday."

[SOAP PLAYS HIS SONG]

SELMA: Hey Soap, that was great! I loved the part about the blocks. Very subversive. And I just wanted to say sorry about Brewer. He's been going through a lot lately. He's a little upset that a song he made was so successful.

SOAP: I like when my songs are successful. It means I'm putting smiles on the faces of people who yearn for simpler times, and also the incredibly stupid. Some of the dumbest fuckers in the world, really. They deserve happiness too.

SELMA: As someone who used to write songs about Halloween, I understand. It's a childish holiday for babies and it's honestly pathetic when adults wear costumes. If you dress up as something you're not, you're a liar—AND sexually deranged. If I was a vampire—and I intend to be one someday—I would be very upset to see a normal human dressing up like a vampire in my neighborhood. If you're gonna do it you at least need to commit. Drink someone's blood. Turn into a bat. Anything.

SOAP: I saw what you meant up until the drinking blood stuff. Seems a little extreme to me. Also, I find YooHoos to be much yummier. And I think Halloween can be a really fun holiday. It's the only day out of the whole year where I get to wear my Charlie Brown shirt without everyone thinking I'm a FUCKING loser.

SELMA: Now that I have a hit song and I'm going to make millions, nobody thinks I'M a loser. I'm headlining the Pan-Am Summer Jam for christ's sake. Wheaties didn't just put me on a cereal box—they made a whole damn mural of me on the side of the cereal factory. Elvis called to say he's renaming his banana and peanut butter sandwich after me.

SOAP: Congratulations Selma, I'm happy for your success. I really am. I'm a little jealous, I must admit. Not that I want money or fame or anything, I just always—well—I just always wanted to have enough money to get myself a good car, and not just a PlayMobil. A real, adult's car. Something I would take really good care of. Washing it, changing the oil—basically I would never do stuff like cutting my own brake lines or smashing off my side mirrors. Yep, I'd keep it real nice. It'd be my baby.

SELMA: Hey, Soap, you dropped a dollar.

SOAP: Oh, dang. Thank you, I'm reaching down for it now. Oh no! A bird got it! And it flew out the door!

SELMA: Oh wow. Some luck you have.

SOAP: It's ok. That bird needed that dollar a lot more than me. And we're good, you don't have to apologize for Brewer. I get it. He's basically like a 13 year old boy who drank two pots of coffee while going through his second puberty. And he's really torn up about how there's not gonna be a war on Christmas Island. Personally, I am supportive of the democratically elected president of Christmas Island. Whatever his name may be. Or her. But probably him. It's still the '60s after all. There is much progress still to be made.

SELMA: Oh? Shire President Gordon Thompson... Kringle? Personally I'm torn about the governance of Christmas Island. I hear that residents find the system of administration frustrating, with the island run by bureaucrats in the federal government, but subject to the laws of Western Australia and enforced by federal police. There is a feeling of resignation that any progress on local issues is hampered by the confusing governance system. However, I do not believe that a violent military overthrow is the solution.

SOAP: Agreed. We can find common ground, even while voicing our differences of opinion. I wish Brewer could see that.

SELMA: Me too. But honestly I just need him to be sane enough to get through this arena tour. Hey, speaking of live shows. I know you turned down the Executive's Union Ball, but maybe you could come as a fan? We'd love to have your support there.

SOAP: Sure thing, Selma. Anything for a friend.

BREWER: Hey Selma! Let's get going! A guy from the bank just came down here to bring us our big bag of money! It's got a dollar sign on it!

SELMA: Gotta go, Soap! Good to see you.

NARRATOR: Two weeks later, Selma and Brewer stand before 10,000 screaming fans at the Chemical Bank New York Trust Company Arena in Stamford, CT. It's real fucking folk music and

people are losing their fucking minds. It's even harder to hear them than the Beatles, when they eventually existed. People are behaving like animals. They are moshing, they are screaming, they are eating barbeque ribs, and touching each other. A guy dressed in a sailor suit just keeps going around kissing different girls. Conversely, animals are behaving like people. Chickens are shedding tears at the poignant fingerpicked arpeggios. Cattle are relishing the lyrical density in tales of good love gone awry. Weed was just invented and it's making teenagers find profundity in badly strummed three-chord cookie-cutter ballads about holding hands and picking daffodils beneath the warmth of the Sun King's rays. There's Newsies. Remember Newsies? They were the little kids that said extra extra and sold papers. They are here, and the headlines say "FOLK AIN'T DEAD." Think about how successful a concert would have to be for boys to show up and sell newspapers at it. It's not just arenas. They headline cruise ships. They cut the ribbon at new car dealerships. Brewer buys an Aston Martin DB4 GT Jet and immediately drives it fifty-five miles per hour into the Hoover Dam. They smash up the remains of his Aston Martin during a concert at a demolition derby. They perform the halftime show at Super Bowl I. They perform show after show, every night, and everything starts to congeal, and both Selma and Brewer lose complete track of all time, and by the 200th performance of "My Car Don't Go," Brewer can't get 30 seconds into it without attempting to throw acid on the audience. Finally, the lights go out, the tour is done, and Brewer Grouse finds himself in familiar territory. Drunk, unhappy, sulking into the Gaslight Grill, he graces the unwashed vermin who reside there with the radiance of his newfound success.

COOKIE: Well, well, well. Look what the cat dragged in.

BREWER: Yeah, yeah, I'm back.

COOKIE: Whoa! Brewer, you SCARED me! I didn't see you come in! But check out what my cat brought me! It's a dead rat wearing a full diaper!

BREWER: That rat is how I feel right now.

COOKIE: You feel like you got a full diaper?

BREWER: FUCK! NO! I mean dead. Or the rat part. Or maybe I don't know. I just want to whine about everything so bad. I feel like a little piece of shit. I feel like Dennis the Menace.

COOKIE: Hee hee hee, all that success and you still ain't happy, Brewer. Hey—have you ever wondered if you are a dumb fuck who has no idea what he wants?

BREWER: All my jewels and sports cars and easy women just make me feel like a total fucking phony because I know those evil people on Christmas Island are enjoying another day of tropical FUCKING serenity.

COOKIE: I'm not trying to insult you while you're talking, but I'm going to turn the news on so I have someone else other than you to listen to when you start complaining.

REPORTER: Breaking news out of Christmas Island this evening. The really bad kind of hurricane has struck, decimating this quaint, quiet ocean outpost.

BREWER: TURN THE TV UP!

REPORTER: The hurricane is so bad they're making a new category for it. Seven. Already there are outpourings of sympathy around the world for the poor, poor widdle citizens of Christmas Island. The President of the United States, who is John F. Kennedy since this is the early '60s, said that the country is so fucked up now, it wouldn't make any sense to have a war there. Mother nature has already done enough.

BREWER: FUCK! The damn government is so corrupt, they don't even want to start wars anymore! What is this country coming to!

COOKIE: Kind of seems pointless to declare war on a country that lost all of its infrastructure and bananas or whatever. But... Maybe they could still get the Navy to do a drive-by with one of their boats?

BREWER: No. It's pointless. What's that gonna do? Kill a couple civilians? Big deal. A hurricane could do that. Now that this stupid hurricane hit, eeeeeveryone's gonna think the people of Chrismtas Island are sooooo brave and soooo resilient. Nobody's gonna be talking about their... Uhhh... You know... Puppy mills. Their loose liquor laws. Their many copyright infringements that go unlitigated. Just to name a few examples.

COOKIE: I know Brewer, it's a shame. But that's life. Hey, don't you have a show tonight? The Executive's Union Ball?

BREWER: Maybe. Maybe I'll be dead by then. Say... Would you ever kill a man, Cookie? If he asked you to?

COOKIE: You want me to kill you? I'm not gonna kill you Brewer. You've got a great life. You find more dollars than anyone I've ever met.

BREWER: Yeah but everyone likes my music for COMMERCIAL reasons. Not for my MESSAGE.

COOKIE: What about the bankers? Didn't they believe in you back when nobody else did? I can't think of anyone more fulfilling to make music for than bankers.

BREWER: Bankers don't feel anything. They're empty inside. That's why they understand my music so well.

COOKIE: And these bankers, they're going to be at the Executive's Union Ball, right?

BREWER: That's right. You know. Maybe it's not all bad. It's a chance to go back to my roots. Yeah. But I can't play the hits. I'm going to perform a brand new song, that I'll write in my head on the way over, summarizing everything I've seen, everything I've learned, everything there is to know about this crazy decade called the '60s that has only just begun.

COOKIE: Sounds like you're gonna have a lot of fun up on that stage there, Brewer. Have a good evening! Byebye!

NARRATION: Brewer steps out of the Gaslight Grill. The dying rays of the sunset offer little respite from the frigid New York winds. He lights up a cigarette and scowls at the world. He takes a short walk from Beaver Street to Wall Street, stepping over loose dollar after loose dollar on the snow-pocked sidewalk. He glares at the money, refusing to pick it up, and as he keeps walking, they turn into five dollar bills, then tens, twenties, and by the time he reaches Wall Street, he sees a one hundred dollar bill. He kicks it away, and it catches a draft and flies right into his back pocket. Suddenly, he looks up, and his jaw drops. In front of him, he sees the big portly man in the blue suit—the same one he had seen twice before—walking toward him with three beautiful and enormous Burmese Mountain dogs all wearing shiny blue 1st place ribbons. Brewer stands still and shuts his mouth. The man in the blue suit tips his hat and smiles as he walks past. His teeth are perfect. A car on the street slams the brakes and a woman rolls down her window and throws her bra at his head and then peels out. The man in the blue suit laughs to himself, bites the bra to see if it's real, stuffs the bra into his pocket, and walks off.

[crowd murmuring sfx]

SELMA: Brewer, you're here! Why are you carrying your shoes? Your feet are blue!

BREWER: [mumbling] He bit the bra to see if it was real... Why'd he do that...

SELMA: What? Who did Brewer?

BREWER: There's a fat guy in a blue suit that I'm obsessed with—nevermind.

SELMA: That doesn't explain why you took your shoes off in the dead of winter.

BREWER: I'm feeling a vague sense of intense dissatisfaction that I only know how to express through self-damaging behavior that other people can observe.

SELMA: Oh! Well okay, as long as you have a grasp of what's going on.

BREWER: How much longer until we have to go on? Before we play, I want to go into the basement and turn a bunch of valves and cranks everywhere until all the steam is giving me 2nd degree burns.

SELMA: We're playing last. First we gotta sit through a booooooring solo set from an up-and-coming nobody named Bob Dylan.

BREWER: Bob Dylan? You mean that kid from St. Louis County, Minnesota, born on May 24, 1941, to Abram Zimmerman and Beatrice "Beatty" Stone? He keeps showing up at the Gaslight Grill begging for guitar strings. I gave him a high E. Only string I had.

SELMA: Oh yeah I helped him to his seat at the Gaslight Grill the other night. I thought he was blind 'cause he was wearing sunglasses indoors.

BREWER: Poor kid. Moved all the way from Minnesota for nothing. This industry is a loaded fucking gun and he is placing it straight into his mouth. Another dumb fuck lives and dies. Another unmarked grave for a total loser. Oh well. It would be sad if it wasn't so predictable.

DYLAN: Hey guys, what are you talking about? It's me, Bob. Bob Dylan.

BREWER: Nothing. Just this fucked up ass industry. How dumb and smiling greenhorns like you look like walking target practice for industry execs. You look like a suckling pig on a big platter to them. You got an apple in your mouth. You will never fucking get royalties.

DYLAN: You seem to think I'm some kinda folk singer or something. Truth is I ain't nothing. Nothing but me anyway. Don't write songs. Certainly don't sing 'em. Can barely hear them most of the time.

BREWER: Yeah well me neither. If you ask me, folk music is already over. In fact it never began. Never meant nothing to nobody and that's why so many of these hip cats and bureaucrats are trying to wrap their heads around it. But tell me, what do YOU think folk music is about?

DYLAN: I don't play folk music, so I wouldn't know. But I assume it's about tiny men in big sweaters, and maybe a woman with a flower in her hair handing a different flower to a soldier. It's music played by people who look like they wash their clothes in the river, and it makes the river dirtier. At its core, Folk Music is really about just one thing: getting drunk and looking into the mirror.

BREWER: Wrong. It's about pussy and power. Just because all folk songs are wispy, melancholy rubbish doesn't mean folk musicians can't commit petty vandalism all of the time. Folk music is about blacking out and punching walls. And I mean that metaphorically. And literally. The times are a'changing, you know.

DYLAN: No they're not. The more they change, the more they stay the same.

SELMA: Something is happening here and you don't know what it is, do you Mr. Dylan?

DYLAN: Wrong! I don't think anything is happening here, and even if it was, I wouldn't want to know what it is. And you got some nerve calling me Dylan. How do you know that's my name? That wasn't my name before I was a baby. But you didn't know that, did you? You didn't do your homework on me.

BREWER: I don't do homework. I don't study. You see, music is something that you feel. Either you feel it or you don't, and it can't be learned.

DYLAN: Well I learned music the old fashioned way. I had it explained to me by an Okie. Poor bastard whose licorice farm went up in smoke during the dust bowl. Lost everything he had except three chords and a sad story. Lotta dust too. Still had lots of dust. Barns full of the stuff. Nobody else seemed to want it.

BREWER: I learned music the authentic way. I laid down naked on top of an acoustic guitar until innate musicality flowed into me. I still can't grow pubic hair on this one patch where one of my nuts got caught in the strings. And that's difficult for me because, as we all know, we live in the '60s, and having huge amounts of pubic hair has never been more culturally important. But you see, I suffer for my art. What do you know about art?

DYLAN: Art? You think I care about Art? You think I listen to music, or watch TV? When you don't see me, where do you think I am? I'll tell you where I am. I'm locked alone, in a windowless room in the dark, and I'm just waiting. You think I'm watching Bonanza? Do you think I'm on the edge of my seat at home, waiting to see what the Cartwrights get into next? Do you think a guy like me would seriously sit down and watch a family-focused Western set in the 1860s centered on a wealthy family living in the vicinity of Virginia City, Nevada? Seriously? Do you seriously believe that? You got some nerve, man. You think I'm watching a season-two episode like "Badge Without Honor"? You think I would really care if the Cartwrights grew suspicious of U.S Deputy Marshall Gerald Eskith, played by Dan Duryea? You think Bob Dylan is on the edge of his seat, yelling "Don't Go! Don't Go!" at the TV, begging that reluctant witness not to accompany the Deputy Marshall to that racketeering trial in San Francisco? That's seriously what you believe, man? Not the dark room thing I said before? You don't believe that I'm alone in a dark room all the time and that instead, I am on my couch at home, watching Bonanza and totally freaking the fuck out all of the time? Okay. Whatever man. If that's what you believe then I guess I'm not for you.

BREWER: All I'm saying is, you better have a plan for when you fail out of this business. I give your music career 15 minutes.

DYLAN: Like a song.

BREWER: You think songs are 15 minutes long?

DYLAN: Mine are.

BREWER: I thought you don't write songs?

DYLAN: I don't. Calling them songs is sort of an exaggeration. It's just life, man. I don't even know life. I can't even explain. The man above blessed me. Not that I believe in him. But that's life.

BREWER: You should get your CDL or learn to haul gravel or something.

DYLAN: I'm on it, man. I got a gig in the spring working on Maggie's Farm. Good pay and good benefits. I doubt that anything will happen to make me reconsider.

BREWER: That's nice. If I ever failed out of the music industry, I would probably choose to do something irrational and violent instead. I guess that's why I'm a real artist and you will NEVER meet Barack Obama one day and get a medal from him.

COSMO: If I failed out of the music biz I'd build the world's first roller coaster with an in-flight meal.

SELMA: Hey Cosmo! Thanks for coming. Have you met Bob Dylan? He's opening tonight.

COSMO: Well aren't you a cute little peanut of a guy! How you doing, Bob! We need to get you some red meat in ya! Are you sick? Oh, by the way, Brewer, your sister is here. Security told her she could only have five kids with her at a time, so she's got like 10 kids waiting by the garbage outside.

BREWER: Oh yeah. I see Little Baby Boo Boo over there manhandling the cheese cubes. [yelling] Hey Little Baby Boo Boo! No solid food yet! You got one tooth!

LITTLE BABY BOO BOO: Auought.

TIPPER: Hey brother! Thanks for the invite. I don't get out of the shoe often. You hungry? I got a soup going outside in my car.

BREWER: What kind? You know what, nevermind. Are you pregnant again?

COSMO: Yeah, I was going to say Tipper, you're glowing!

TIPPER: Oh yeah, I'm pregnant big-time, but that's not what the glow is from. I'm doing a sleep study down by the nuclear reactor in order to afford my shoe mortgage. Yeah, the bank was going to take the house—I mean shoe—away and put it on a giant's foot.

BREWER: Bastards. Haven't giants already taken enough from us? They act like all our beanstalks belong to them. And they join all our pickup basketball games, knowing it's no fun for us.

SELMA: Nice to meet you Tipper, I'm Selma! I play with Brewer. You have some beautiful children. What are their names?

TIPPER: If you think these children are beautiful, you should see the ones I got waiting outside. It's really the B-Team in here right now, if you know what I mean. This is the bench. They needed some reps. Little Baby Boo Boo wouldn't shut up about the cheese cubes so I swapped 'em out.

BREWER: Yeah, Selma, these kids are really not ready for primetime. I only know like half of their names.

TIPPER: There's Custard Joe, Oud, Gin Rummy, Rinky Dink, Skeener Jr., Suzy Ooze, Slang Tang, Tom Sandoval, Elf Boy, Soup Kid, Squealer, and Rumpelstiltskin.

SELMA: Wow! That's amazing. You must be so proud of your beautiful family! Is your husband here?

TIPPER: Honey, the second these fellas roll over in the morning and look out of my big window and realize that they are in a shoe, they get out of there as fast as they can. They all say different things, like "I'm going on the space shuttle" or "President Kennedy needs me." It doesn't matter what they say, but they all say it and leave. And meanwhile, I have another mouth to feed.

SELMA: Oh. I'm sorry to hear that. If it makes you feel any better, societal norms are changing to be more understanding to someone in your position.

TIPPER: Great. I can't wait for that. Anyway, I gotta go swap out the B-Team for the starters. They need minutes too. Say goodbye Little Baby Boo Boo.

LITTLE BABY BOO BOO: Aouguht. Bye bye.

TIPPER: I can't decide if he's my most favorite or least favorite. Anyway, have a good show Brewer! Your family will be watching from the back and we love you very much! I love you and support you!

BREWER: Whatever. I'm an artist. Family means nothing to me. Lyrics are my siblings and chords are my parents. And a song is the only family gathering I need.

COSMO: I'm going to give you some space too, Brewer. I just... I just saw something amazing. I... I'm beside myself right now. I feel like I might go berserk.

SELMA: You're sweating, Cosmo. Is everything okay?

COSMO: Do you see that over there? That's the most beautiful thing I have ever seen. I must speak with her.

NARRATOR: Cosmo gestures towards the banquet hall. We see a benihana chef—but not just any benihana chef. This benihana chef is a voluptuous vixen of the highest order, she looks like a velvet painting of an hourglass, and we see her through Cosmo's eyes as she flips steak after steak in slow motion, her beautiful black hair flowing in rhythm with her masterful grill-top cooking. She slices into steak after steak to reveal a perfect medium rare every time, and as we see her placing a piece of steak in her mouth, Cosmo stands quivering, making guttural noises and drooling fiendishly.

COSMO: Brewer. I have to tell you something and I have to tell you something right now. After I talk to this woman, my life is going to change forever. I will no longer be my own man. I will follow her to the ends of the earth. I just want you to know something—that you can never, ever count on me ever again. However, I would regret it if I didn't tell you something right now, as your friend. I just want to tell you, Brewer, that—well, you've been a little edgy lately. You've been a little much. You should stop flipping out at nothing all the time. It's weird. Okay. Anyway. Goodbye, Brewer. Probably forever.

NARRATOR: Cosmo turns his back towards Brewer, takes off his hat and clutches it in front of himself with both hands. Selma and Brewer watch with interest as Cosmo begins speaking to the woman. She looks confused at first, and then smiles. Suddenly, the beautiful benihana chef starts flicking pieces of meat straight off the grill into Cosmo's mouth at a rapid rate.

SELMA: Ohh, I get it. Food and sex are the same thing to him.

[microphone squeal sfx]

BREWER: Sounds like the music's about to begin.

ANNOUNCER: Ladies and gentlemen, bankers and brokers, CEOs and CFOs, folk singers and the gainfully employed, may I have your attention. Please join me in welcoming to the stage a young nobody—who you will NEV-VER hear from again—I mean, this ugly fuck's going the way of the dodo—I'm not even worried how dismissive of him I'm being because I'm so certain that this guy was born to be a nobody—PLEASE join me in welcoming to the stage... Bob Dylan.

[light coughing, light applause... like 4 claps]

BOB DYLAN: Now this here's a ol' coal mining song I heard on the banks of the Tuckasegee River out there in North Carolina. I learned it from this old coal miner with no arms who had to grip the pickaxe with his teeth. And my life was pretty hard too... And a 1, and a 2...

[Bob Dylan song plays in the background and everyone ignores him. Put song way in background, bg chatter sfx AND character dialogue over it.]

BREWER: Singing off-key. Posture's not so good... Total phrenology fail... Oh my god he's got a fucking kazoo.

SELMA: I think it's called a harmonica. Say, isn't that the journalist on the folk beat at The Warbler's Trestle?

FREDDY: Brewer. Good to see you. And this must be Selma Jones. Congrats on the hit single. It really sounded like you guys were having a lot of fun in the studio, huh?

BREWER: It's a shit track and you know it Looter! What's your angle? Who hired you? I'll kill you!

FREDDY: Relax, man. I'm just here to write a story about this young crooner who's got the press all worked up.

SELMA: Who? Is there somebody good singing behind Bob Dylan?

FREDDY: No. I'm here to see Bob Dylan. Looks like he's a bust though. Can't sing. No sex appeal. Zero. None. Total phrenology fail too.

BREWER: That's what I said.

FREDDY: If you want to make it in the music business, you HAVE to make the nymphos go crazy. And the kleptos. And don't forget the pill poppers.

BREWER: Sure, Dylan may win over the pill poppers. But the nymphos and kleptos? Not a chance.

SELMA: There were 3,000 nymphos at the Pan-Am Summer Jam. Security kept having to spray the crowd with ice cold water. And I think it was laced with whatever the opposite of pheromones are.

FREDDY: Look, that's swell. I'm glad you get to play your little songs and frolic around up there.

BREWER: A low down journalist like you is a mere street dog before me. I'm an ARTIST. And artists are like GODS. We get to sleep in as much as we want. We're encouraged to do DRUGS. People like it when we do drugs. The world's my green room. And a green room is a bathroom to me. And I can drink as much as I want in the bathroom before I go onstage, and I can sing off key and forget all the words and people still pay to see me do it. And at the end of it all you know what they're gonna do? They're gonna beg me to let them give me ASS. And what do YOU get? Who are YOU? Anyone here begging you for some ass?

FREDDY: I'm a married man. I'm in my 20s and it's the 1960s. I'm already a grandfather. I told you before, I don't even like folk music. It's just that being a music writer pays so well. I have two garages and five cars. When Herbert Hoover said there'd be two cars in every garage, I took it as a personal threat. There is a chicken constantly cooking in my house. My wife finishes cooking one chicken, and then she slaps in a new one for later. Things are going pretty good. I have four kids. Our neighborhood is so safe that none of them wear bike helmets. I don't envy you, Brewer.

BREWER: Yeah well I bet you hang out with a bunch of nerds.

FREDDY: My friends are actually here. I'd like you to meet Peter Parker and Clark Kent.

PARKER & KENT: Hello.

BREWER: One. Two. Three. Three pussies.

FREDDY: Call us what you will, Brewer. Maybe my friends are nerds. But Peter's a pretty damn good photographer. And Clark, well. He mostly covers pet fashion shows and beloved zoo animals' birthdays. He's not really cut out for this line of work. And doesn't seem to do much else. Great body though.

SELMA: Yeah, not bad.

BREWER: He is a hot nerd, I'll give him that.

SELMA: So you just came here to insult Bob Dylan?

FREDDY: You're defending Bob Dylan? Really? Just a second ago I overheard Brewer telling someone that they were all going to hold him down and pee on him later.

SELMA: Journalists like you make me sick, Freddy. You're always tearing people down. As musicians we're trying to lift people up. To bring just a shred of meaning to their gray little lives. Because music is life. It's MY life. And my life is NEVER going to end. Because I'm going to PURCHASE IMMORTALITY WITH COLD HARD CASH I MADE FROM MUSIC. Imagine. I'm going to watch entire generations of your family be born and die from old age. This isn't just a paycheck to some people.

FREDDY: Listen, Selma. I've read all about you. There's rumors going around saying you're looking to make a romantic pass at a certain bloodsucking lord of darkness as a pathway to immortality. As it so happens, I was just in Romania covering a new dance trend called the Transylvania Twist.

SELMA: I'm listening.

FREDDY: I don't think I should say exactly who it is, but maybe I was thinking you could COUNT on me to DRAG YOU to... Hold on one second. I was thinking that you could Count on me to drag you to LA. Lala. Whatever. I think I can introduce you to Count Dracula.

SELMA: Yes sir. Good to meet you sir. Can I give you a headshot to pass along to Dracula? I got two options. In the first one I'm holding a skull and in the second one I'm holding a rubber chicken.

FREDDY: Look, I gotta go. I got word that a REAL artist is performing at a very bohemian cafe-inspired deli not far from here. This guy named Robert Fripp is performing modal mixed-meter guitar odysseys that allegedly stretch upwards of 10 minutes. From what I hear he's gonna leave you folk folks in the dust.

BREWER: How is he gonna LEAVE us in the dust? We're already dusty.

FREDDY: C'mon Peter. C'mon Clark. Let's blow this gaudy Wall Street function and hobnob with the people who REALLY control society—up-and-coming fringe artists working in unestablished mediums.

SELMA: Have fun! Say hi to Dracula for me!

BREWER: Fucking hack! Fucking piece of shit! He has no inquisitive soul, no artistic curiosity, no dignity—and he smells like the audience at a folk concert! I'm going to fucking puke if I keep yelling. I might go hide in a storage closet and sit on the floor on my hands in the dark.

SELMA: Hey look, Soap came after all!

SOAP: Hey Selma, Brewer. Sorry I'm late, I was working overtime at the soup kitchen to help all of those good people get the soup they need. They love all the beautiful singing I do as I ladle it out. They call me—and you wouldn't believe this—the singing soup slinger.

SELMA: Aww. Sounds like you're having so much fun out there.

SOAP: That's right, Selma. It is fun to help others and to show benevolence to your fellow man.

BREWER: Great, looky here. It's the high and mighty Soap Weathers, walking around like he doesn't have any streaks in his underwear like the rest of us.

SOAP: You have streaks in your underwear, Brewer?

BREWER: Here to judge me too, Soap? Hate me today? Hate me tomorrow?

SOAP: No. I realized earlier at the soup kitchen that there is no free will and that every person is merely a product of circumstances beyond their control. I realized that you have no control over

who you are or how you behave and because of that, it would be foolish to show you anything other than the joy and goodwill that I intend to show to all living things.

BREWER: Wow. You trying to get in my pants or something? Even knowing I got streaks in my underwear? You're nasty, Soap! You think that's okay what I did to my underwear?

SELMA: He's not trying to get into your disgusting underwear, Brewer. He's offering you an olive branch.

BREWER: How am I supposed to clean my underwear with a branch?

SELMA: It's a metaphor, Brewer. There's no branch.

BREWER: Whoa, hold on. He promised me a branch. You're cheaping out on me Soap?

SELMA: Look. Soap. I'll explain your gesture of goodwill to Brewer later, but we've got more important matters to discuss. We're going to perform a brand new song tonight and we could use a little help.

SOAP: Me? Sing a song with you? But I don't know about all these Wall Street guys with their gold bars and rubies and gemstones. They know about stocks. I know about blocks. They know about bucks. I know about trucks. They know about amortizing mortgage-backed securities. I know about—

SELMA: It'll be fine! We're singing about something we ALL share in common—living in important times... The 1960s!

BREWER: The '60s do feel like things are about to go crazy. And well. I'd like to think that our music is a really big reason why.

SOAP: OK. I'd love to play with you guys. I just have to run out real quick and check on my grandmother. She's very sick because she got sprayed by a skunk. It gave her a disease that usually only skunks get, and she smells like shit... Because she has bad hygiene. But I tell people it's the skunk thing.

SELMA: OK see you in a few!

BANKER: Evening Brewer. And this must be Selma.

BREWER: Are you some kind of banker or something?

BANKER: We've met many, many times Brewer. It's me. Stanislav Goldbars. Don't you remember that time I gave you a trust fund then abandoned you at Lightning Island?

SELMA: Lightning Island? Is that the store on the Upper West Side that sells nothing but poppers? And they only sell to you if you claim to be an undercover police officer?

BREWER: How could I forget? Well Mr. Goldbars, what can I do for you today, other than playing at your little show?

BANKER: Now, now, I don't need anything more from you. In fact I wanted to reward you. Me and the fellas know you've been real down about all this Christmas Island stuff. And how there's not gonna be a war. We were really hoping for war too. But there's a silver lining. My colleague, Richmond Cash, happens to be the CEO of United Pineapple of Delaware, who have just seized power on Christmas Island as part of the U.S.'s relief efforts for our most hated enemy. We would like to appoint you to the board of United Pineapple of Delaware, who will oversee all farming, administration, and military operations on the island. A second hurricane hit today and the democratically elected leader was swept into the Indian Ocean at a hundred miles per hour. They found his guts all over the globe.

BREWER: Too good of a fate for that bastard.

BANKER: So basically, you can do whatever you want to those people now. We just need you to keep your cool boots on their shitty little necks. You're gonna be God to these people, Brewer. And you have the freedom to act unilaterally. The rest of the board are friends of mine—Holden MaDollars, J.P. Morgan Chase Jr., Diamond De La Trillionaire, and Bill Gates Sr. They'll let you do anything you want, as long as they're free to extract every last natural resource from that god forsaken dump.

BREWER: Mr. Goldbars, on behalf of folk music, I accept your invitation to join the board of United Pineapple of Delaware. I simply have one request. I would like to be provided with a nuclear bomb.

BANKER: All in due time, Brewer! But hey—until then, enjoy the party. Get really drunk and go on a huge rant. Do whatever you want. You're the star tonight!

SELMA: Hey Brewer, we're on stage in like five minutes. Come with me to the green room really quick, I want to show you something.

BREWER: I hope it's a gun and you're showing it to me by putting it in my mouth and pulling the trigger. Too much stuff is happening too quickly and I am bored of being alive. I hope I get into a plane crash.

NARRATOR: Brewer follows Selma through the packed crowd of bankers checking their pocket watches with their monocles. They head backstage and into the green room, which is filled with luxurious velvet furniture, fur walls, leather cigars, a suckling pig being turned on a crank by a man licking his lips, a bottle of liquor just labeled BROWN and two complimentary Rockettes

smoking long, thin cigarettes. Selma waves the women out and they start coughing so hard that even Brewer gets a little worried. Selma waits patiently for the Rockettes to leave the room.

BREWER: What's going on here? Pretty light turnout for an intervention.

SELMA: It's not an intervention, Brewer. I got you a gift.

BREWER: A gift? Like a karmic gift? Like what I deserve? Just let me know if you're going to kill me. I'm not going to make a big deal about it. I'm probably not even going to run.

SELMA: Stop asking me to kill you, Brewer. Seriously. I didn't know what to make of it the first couple times but it's really starting to freak me out.

BREWER: Fine. Don't kill me. I literally don't give a shit. So where's my present?

SELMA: You once mentioned off-hand that you were obsessed with a man in a blue suit. You didn't elaborate at all but it seemed to have some profound psychic impact on you. You made this crazy face I've never seen you make, except for the time you ran over that peacock with your car.

BREWER: Fucking rainbow pigeons. This city is swarming with them. And the MAYOR's not doing anything!

SELMA: Brewer. The suit. I'm giving it to you. It's a baby blue suit. It comes with a vest, a pocketwatch, and I even got some of those blue suede shoes Elvis is always singing about.

BREWER: Oh yeah. Thanks Selma. This is gonna be my signature suit. From now on, the color blue will strike an immeasurable, extraordinary fear in the hearts of the people of Christmas Island. A fear so inescapable, so unrelenting, they'll wish it was THEM who got swept out into the ocean at a hundred miles per hour and got ripped apart by the winds and had guts flung all over the planet, from New Zealand to the North Pole. And I owe it all to you, Selma.

SELMA: Well... Thank you, Brewer. That was the only nice thing—I guess—I've ever heard you say. And even in order for you to say it you had to talk about your intense hatred for a whole group of people you've never met from an island you've never been to. So I think I understand, in your own way, what you mean. You're welcome Brewer.

BREWER: Unrelated, but do you have any of those pills left? You told me that they were candy, but I knew they were pills the whole time. Well, I hoped they were pills.

SELMA: No. Looks like Soap and Cosmo are already waiting by the stage. You ready, Brewer?

BREWER: OK. Fine. Let's do it.

[applause, microphone squeal sfx]

BREWER: Thank you, thank you. It's great to be here supporting the Executive's Union. Without a union, ordinary CEOs don't have enough power to influence the big, mean, and corrupt government. Through the power of your solidarity, you people can really raise hell.

[Applause]

BREWER: I hope no one here is ready to rock, because we're about to play some anemic mostly acoustic folk music. And piano. Piano is acoustic. This one's for United Pineapple of Delaware. And the whole damn '60s. I just know this fledgling decade is gonna be crazy. We're gonna fix everything. We're gonna get total freedom for all miscellaneous kinds of people. We're gonna make cars cost a hundred dollars. We're gonna end traffic. And we're gonna do it all through the power of song. And a brutal, unrelenting regime on a small, little-known island in the Indian Ocean. Now without further ado, this one's called... There Comes a Time When the Times Must Change.

[They play the song]

NARRATOR: Six months later, in The United Pineapple of Delaware Occupied Territory of Christmas Island.

SELMA: Okay, I think this is his house. The massive spire with all the skulls on it and 10 wrecked cars in the front yard.

DRACULA [Heavy dracula accent]: This guy seems a little veird...

SELMA: No, no, no. Well, I mean, he is, but he's harmless. That's not exactly true. He's only really a threat to himself. And the population of Christmas Island.

DRACULA: I vonder if he will even like me!

SELMA: He's gonna love you, honey.

[doorbell sfx]

[creaking sfx of massive door]

BREWER: Who is it, who is it? If it's more villagers asking for bread, I'm going to whip this bat at your ankles like it's a bola—Oh, hey Selma. It's good to see you. And who's this handsome fella in the satin cape? And my what sharp teeth you have! And he's holding a big ass bag of cash! Oh Selma, you got little bit of a bite mark on your neck there—

SELMA: Brewer, I want you to meet somebody.

DRACULA: I want to introduce myself! My name is Count Dracula!

SELMA [dracula accent]: We're going steady!

BREWER: I don't know why you're telling me like I give a fuck. You're dating Dracula big fucking deal. No offense Dracula. Love your work. Now everybody get inside. I got one thing to attend to out here first.

NARRATOR: As Selma and Dracula go inside giving each other eskimo kisses, Brewer stares out towards the ocean. On the beach, he sees the man in the blue suit. The same one from New York City is here, at the beach on Christmas Island, looking directly at Brewer. Brewer looks down at his outfit—he is wearing the very same blue suit. The man opens his mouth to speak.

BLUE SUIT: Nice suit. Oh look, a dollar.

NARRATOR: The man then walks toward the water and gets onto a jet ski. The jet ski is designed to look like a big can of Labatt Blue. Three women that did not arrive at the beach with him instinctively get on the back of the jet ski and take their tops off. He floors it straight out into the Indian ocean in a straight line. Never turning. Never looking back. The wake from the jetski washes up a bunch of flotsam onto the beach, including a human kidney which we instinctively know belonged to the former president of Christmas Island. The man in the blue suit goes further and further away until he is nothing more than a glimmer in the distance. Brewer Grouse smiles, turns towards his mailbox, hits it as hard as he can with his elbow and cuts himself really bad, and goes back inside.

THE END

LET'S START A WAR (ON CHRISTMAS ISLAND) (CANNONBALLS AND COCONUTS)

F C
Way down south there's some bastards on an island

F C
And I ain't talkin' 'bout Australia

G Am
They'll crucify you, they'll beat and jail ya

F C
Like a street dog they'll impale ya

They say that war is crazy but I disagree
It makes the most sense to me
No one wants to know the truth and hear my brave message

F D7
Let's teach those bastards a lesson

We'll burn down all their jungles, we'll topple all their forts
We'll turn their beaches into glass
We'll dry up their rivers and block all their ports
We'll make 'em learn our sports

CHORUS

C Am F
Our politicians won't take out this tyrant
C

Just 'cause it might get violent
C Am
But I refuse to remain so peaceful and silent

F G C
Let's start a war on Christmas Island

VERSE 4

They've got a population of fourteen hundred and two

2

5

I heard the football team was pretty bad, sorry for your losses
I'd ask you to marry me in a church but I know how you hate crosses

7

5

7

2

Would you eat my spaghetti if I don't use garlic?

12

7

2

2 / 5 0

I know you like to fly, do you get carsick?

8xx00x 7xx00x

x0222x

I don't care if I can't see myself in the mirror

8xx00x 7xx00x

5

5 / 7

2

0

Your dark dark coffin helps me see a little clearer

If we go camping would you bite me by the lake?

Would you be offended if I prop our tent with stakes?

I can adjust to your schedule, I used to work nights

I promise I don't bite

Now if someone asks about my neck I'll say it's mosquitos

Picture us in Transylvania sharing Romanian burritos

Would you eat my spaghetti if I don't use garlic?

I know you like to fly, do you get carsick?

No, I don't care if I can't see myself in the mirror

Your dark dark coffin helps me see a little clearer

MY CAR DON'T GO

E

I'll protect you baby, and I will never run

A

Neither will your car, that's the problem, hun'

E

Come on baby, I'll make you so spoiled

A

You can't even keep your engine well oiled

PRE-CHORUS

Bm C#7
Fallen out of love and
F#m B7
Feeling low because

CHORUS

E A
My car don't go
E A
Now we're out of gas
E A
Walking to and fro
F#m C#m
Babe we just won't last

Look me in the eyes babe, I'll never tell you no
That don't mean a thing if you can't get your car to go
Baby can't you see, I don't need a car if you're always with me
That remains to be seen, there's other guys with car keys in their jeans

Bm C#7
Filled with burning desire
F#m B7
Why'd I light my car on fire?

Fallen out of love and
Feeling low because

CHORUS 2

My car don't go
Now we're out of gas
Walking to and fro
Babe we just won't last

Babe, don't go
Now we're out of gas
Walking to and fro
I'm afraid we just won't last

THE SUN'S BIRTHDAY

E C#m
The Earth takes a year to circle the sun
F#m G#m
Along the way we have lots of fun
E C#m
Why's it take a whole dang year, you say?
F#m A7
That way we'll remember what's the sun's birthday

CHORUS

E B
Oh big yellow sun above the bay
A A
I hear today's a special day
E B
I bought you sunglasses, Bans of Ray
A E
How we love to play on your Birthday Day

When the sun goes away we see twinkling stars
I stack up my blocks S-T-A-R
My friend runs them over with his wooden car
R-A-T-S they spell from afar

G#m F#m
The Sun ate his veggies to be strong in the sky
G#m F#m
Goes away at night 'cause he's a little shy
A B
Loves to say good morning, hates to say goodbye

BURGER OR PLUM

D7
I don't need napkins, I don't need a thing
A7

