

THE CIRCLE BELLE

by

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## Cast of Characters

**GRAN DAD JOE**, 60, grandfather of the family

**JAKE**, 18, youngest son

**JEB**, 20, oldest son

**DADDY JOE**, 40, father

**LILLIE**, slightly younger than Daddy Joe, his wife

**SHERIFF BUCK**, middle aged

**JACK HONEYWELL**, mid 30's, corporate advertising executive, professional

**ED NORTHWOOD**, mid 40's, local race track owner

**ABBY**, 19, daughter, cute

**OTIS MAY**, mid 20's, black man from Boston, strong, handsome

A one act.

The play takes place over several days in a barn.

## Act I

## SCENE 1

(1947. A mid-summer Sunday afternoon. A stock car race shop located in North Carolina back woods barn. Tires, rims, tools and supplies are all in their place. A confederate flag hangs above a wall of trophies. An old couch. Chairs and stools are peppered around the shop. A built-in bar and gun rack. A COPPER MOONSHINE STILL sets against the outside wall of the barn, with a tap line nuzzled inside to the bar. A stock car with hood up. A door exits to the main house.)

*(GRAN DAD JOE enters and flips on the shop lights. A trophy in his hands. He looks over at the trophy wall, walks over and lays it on the shelf. JAKE bursts into the shop carrying a 20 pound bag of cane sugar on his shoulder.)*

JAKE

*(excited)*

When will those old boys learn? They ain't no stopping Jake Weaver!

GRAN DAD JOE

Stop nesting in your own feathers and start helping your brother switch out the car.

*(JAKE drops sugar bag near stock car and exits as JEB enters)*

JAKE

Man, I thought you were gonna send that number 10 right in to the infield scoreboard.

JEB

*(yelling to JAKE as he exits)*

I'm getting sick and tired of running interference while you cruise to victory lane.

*(to GRAN DAD JOE)*

As much as he's a pain in the ass, ya gotta love his driving.

GRAN DAD JOE

Your brother lives in a dream world. I keep telling you kids the world's a changing, but the only one that wants to listen is your sister Abby.

JEB

If I had her brain for learning, I'd be rooming right next to her at that fancy college.

*(GRAN DAD JOE walks over to the tap and pours four glasses of moonshine, JEB heads over and takes a stool)*

GRAN DAD JOE

You're the only other one that has half a brain. What the hell are you still doing here, anyway? Take flight, son. Get the hell out of here!

JEB

I'm gonna take flight, right after I sip down some of this smooth smash.

*(GRAN DAD JOE and JEB raise their glasses to toast)*

GRAN DAD JOE

I'm serious JEB, take stock with your life.

*(they toast and sip the moonshine)*

We're damn good at hiding from them feds, but eventually, they will shut us down.

JAKE

*(enters and drops another sugar bag)*

No one is shutting us down, Gran Dad Joe. Why do you keep saying that?

*(walks to the bar, takes his drink and salutes trophies)*

Here's to me.

*(throws back shot)*

GRAN DAD JOE

You live in a dream world, Jake.

JAKE

What the hell is wrong with dreaming!

JEB

Ease it down, Jake. Be respectful.

JAKE

We are the best damn moon shiners and bootleggers this side of the Mississippi. Every law man and politician is on our payroll. We make the best shine around. Our prices are fair. Who the hell is gonna shut us down? The Feds?

GRAN DAD JOE

That's exactly who's gonna shut us down. Daisy Brooks from over in Madison County says the feds have come up with a new program. Any tax agent that can catch moon shiners keeps half the tax revenue for himself.

JAKE

*(laughing)*

You have got to be kidding. Gee, half the tax dollars for himself. Now I'm no brain child, but my math tells me I could triple - half the tax dollars - to Mr. Federal Agent man and that would be one and a half times more than he was supposed to get. And that's the kind of program that will keep you in business.

*(GRAN DAD JOE and JEB look confused)*

JEB

I agree, you ain't no brain child.

*(DADDY JOE enters)*

DADDY JOE

*(impatient)*

Switch out the car. You boys have a bunch of drops tomorrow.

*(walks to bar, downs his shot. Fills another, drinks)*

JAKE

Does anybody here care I just won the Northwood Stakes?

DADDY JOE

What I care about is switching out the car and making sure we drop those loads.

*(to JEB)*

And make sure you collect all those IOU's. Sherriff Buck has been increasing his visits, lately.

GRAN DAD JOE

Yea, like he needs more fishing equipment.

DADDY JOE

Please dad, don't start. All right? Please?

*(to boys)*

We've got a heavy load tomorrow and word has it the feds are beefing up their horsepower. I want you to install the new supercharger, and make sure it's fine tuned. What the hell are you waiting for?

*(enter Lillie)*

LILLIE

Stop working boys, supper's waiting. And make sure you clean up before going in the house. I spent the entire day cleaning while you boys were playing at the race track.

*(the boys take the opportunity to ditch work and head for the door)*

DADDY JOE

You just have a knack for doing that.

*(Lillie looks confused)*

LILLIE

Doing what? Cooking dinner? You best get some before it gets cold.

*(DADDY JOE, JEB and JAKE exit)*

LILLIE

I thought I heard some happy news.

GRAN DAD JOE

I gotta admit winning the Northwood Stakes was damn exciting.

LILLIE

I just got off the phone with Abby. She's coming to visit.

GRAN DAD JOE

*(sarcastic)*

Oh, well that should put Daddy Joe in a cheery mood.

LILLIE

She's bringing a friend. Someone she met at school.

GRAN DAD JOE

Does her friend know she'll be taking her life in her hands with Jake and Jeb? The last friend she brought couldn't take a shower without leaving her clothes on.

LILLIE

It's not a her, it's a him.

GRAN DAD JOE

Cheery mood, indeed.

*(pause)*

She just loves to crank his engine up, doesn't she? And I mean, supercharger!

LILLIE

She is impetuous. Sometimes I wonder if teaching independence and reaching for a better life is the right thing to do.

GRAN DAD JOE

It's the only thing to do. I'm not making excuses, but it's obvious I could have done a better job. But when his mother died...well...it just got tougher and tougher.

*(pause)*

GRAN DAD JOE *(cont'd)*

Speaking of visitors. I met someone at the track. I think he sells soap or something. It seems a fella from Daytona Beach, Florida is starting up some organized racing series, with big prize money, and this fella is looking for drivers. Something about paying for all expenses if he could use our car as a moving bill board. I didn't have time to understand all the details, but he's coming by the shop to talk more. Ed Northwood swears this fella is not a federal agent.

LILLIE

Sounds fetchy to me. What's the gentleman's name?

GRAN DAD JOE

Jack something.....Honeywell.....Jack Honeywell.

LILLIE

What soap company?

GRAN DAD JOE

Don't know. Don't even know if it's soap, but just to be on the safe side, why don't you call Ed Northwood and get the name of the company. Then, call the company and ask for a Jack Honeywell. Ed has a pretty good nose for this kind of stuff, but I'd feel better if you check it out yourself. When is Abby and her friend arriving?

LILLIE

Don't know. It's a surprise. Let's keep it that way. Daddy Joe already has enough things on his mind.

*(SHERIFF BUCK enters)*

SHERIFF BUCK

*(womanizing)*

Lillie. That's a mighty fine dress.

LILLIE

*(uncomfortable)*

Buck.

GRAN DAD JOE

*(to LILLIE)*

Why don't you head up to the house for supper. I'll be up in a minute.

*(LILLIE exits)*

SHERIFF BUCK

I heard Jake won the Northwood Stakes. I guess nobody can catch the Weaver clan.

*(walks over to the bar and helps himself)*

GRAN DAD JOE

I've been hearing rumblings about a beefed up effort from the feds.

SHERIFF BUCK

You wouldn't be getting worried, now, would ya Gran Dad? I mean if those federal revenueurs can pocket public tax money, legally, well then, maybe I should just turn all you boys in.....hell, that would be quite a haul, and legal too boot. Or maybe I should just keep it simple, and raise my fishing fee? What'd you think?

GRAN DAD JOE

I think you better do your job and keep your ears to the floor.

SHERIFF BUCK

I'd rather keep my fishing pole in the water....if you know what I mean.

GRAN DAD JOE

What are you gonna do when we ain't running shine no more?

SHERIFF BUCK

Ain't running moonshine no more? You better stop sucking on that still, brother....you're starting to talk crazy. I'd actually have to start enforcing the law. I'm not even sure I remember how to fire this here gun anymore.

GRAN DAD JOE

The day's coming. The government is sick of losing out on all that tax money, the legal stuff is high quality, and the government is paying people to grow corn and sell it tax free. Sounds like a good honest day's work to me.

SHERIFF BUCK

*(laughing)*

You're a hoot! The hypocrisy of it all.....moonshiner turns into honest corn farmer. Now that's an exciting life, a corn farmer. Somehow I don't see your kids farming corn for a living.

GRAN DAD JOE

I provide for my family the best I know how. Moonshining has afforded me the opportunity to provide plenty for my family. We don't want for nothing. But I do it cuz I have too, not because it's exciting. It's what I know. And I sure don't enjoy flirting with the law. We're honest folk.

SHERIFF BUCK

Yea, you're the best damn moon shining, bootlegging, corn growing honest folk around.

*(enter DADDY JOE)*

DADDY JOE

Hey Sheriff, I heard you were down here. More shine? This week's batch is mighty tasty.

SHERIFF BUCK

I'm a law biding citizen. I sure wouldn't want to get arrested for drinking and driving. I'll tell ya what I could use though.....some fishing money. They just came out with this new rod and reel combo that guarantees I can catch anything that even burps a bubble.

GRAN DAD JOE

We already gave you your fishing money for the week.

SHERIFF BUCK

*(threatening)*

I need some new fishing equipment.

*(pause)*

DADDY JOE

Come on Sheriff. The boys will be collecting IOU's tomorrow during their run. Why don't you stop by for a sip or two and we'll check out your new fishing gear.

SHERIFF BUCK

Sounds like a plan. You're lucky I like you boys.

*(moves toward exit)*

Who knows, by tomorrow, the price of that equipment might even go up. By the way, Miss Lillie is looking mighty sassy.

*(SHERIFF BUCK exits)*

GRAN DAD JOE

One day the Lord's gonna have a reckoning day for that boy. I just hope I'm around to see it.

*(They sit at the bar, DADDY JOE sips. He offers GRAN DAD JOE a drink, he declines )*

GRAN DAD JOE *(cont'd)*

Congratulations on that one, two finish today, son. If there's one thing you learned good, it's setting up a race car and making moon shine.

DADDY JOE

That's two things.

GRAN DAD JOE

I guess it is. You OK? It seems like you've been a little on edge lately.

*(DADDY JOE takes a drink)*

GRAND DAD JOE *(cont'd)*

Our job is to make it...deliver it...but not drink it all.

DADDY JOE

I've just been feeling a little anxious lately.

GRAN DAD JOE

You've been feeling anxious, or the moon shine is making you feel anxious?

DADDY JOE

*(quick tempered)*

So I've been drinking a little more shine lately, so what. The moon shine has nothing to do with it.

GRAN DAD JOE

That would be an example of you being a little edgy.

DADDY JOE

I just have a lot on my mind, that's all. The shine business is getting big. The feds are getting smarter, and everybody wants a bigger piece of the action. I don't know what I'd do if they took us down!

GRAN DAD JOE

If you're talking about getting caught, I'm scared as hell.

DADDY JOE

You scared? Bullshit! I've never seen you scared in your life.

GRAN DAD JOE

I'm not scared of going to jail. I figure I deserve that for breaking the law. I'm scared I won't be able to provide for my family. That both of us won't be able to provide for *our* family.

DADDY JOE

Jesus, that's a scary thought. Jeb and Jake running the family fortune.

GRAN DAD JOE

I'd put my money on Lillie. She's strong, smart and a good provider...for a woman.

DADDY JOE

That's just it, she's a woman. Her place is by my side, cooking, cleaning and taking care of the family. Not making family decisions.

GRAN DAD JOE

I'd trade all the decision making in the world to get your mom back.

*(pause)*

DADDY JOE

What are we gonna do about Sheriff Buck?

GRAN DAD JOE

If the right circumstances came along he'd turn his mother in without conscience.

DADDY JOE

Money has a funny way of bringing demons out in a man.

GRAN DAD JOE

*(jokingly)*

Speaking of demons, Abby's coming.

*(DADDY JOE shoots the rest of his drink and pours another)*

DADDY JOE

That explains my bad feelings of late. The last time she showed up we lost the boys for a week – all they wanted to do was take showers.

GRAN DAD JOE

I get the feeling that won't be a problem this time.

DADDY JOE

When she coming?

GRAN DAD JOE

Don't know. It's a surprise. But don't tell Lillie I told ya. She thinks you got enough going on in that pea brain of yours.

GRAN DAD JOE *(cont'd)*

Sounds like it's time to call a family meeting. Let's get some grub!

*(They walk out, blackout)*

## SCENE 2

(JAKE and JEB are working on the car. LILLIE is tidying up the bar. DADDY JOE and GRAN DAD JOE walk in to the shop.)

GRAN DAD JOE

Great supper, Lillie. How's that supercharger coming along boys?

JAKE

They should let us run this set up on the track. It's more fun running shine than running in circles.

DADDY JOE

There's nothing fun about spending jail time.

JEB

Jail time?

JAKE

Is this about Sheriff Buck? Hell, let's buy him a whole truckload of fishing stuff. He won't have time to collect any money. He'll always be fishing!

JEB

Definitely no brain child.

JAKE

Smart enough to whoop your ass!

JEB

You want to count those trophies? Most of them are mine!

LILLIE

Pay attention boys!

*(DADDY JOE quickly glances at LILLIE, then GRAN DAD JOE)*

GRAN DAD JOE

It's bigger than Sheriff Buck.

JAKE

Like me winning the Northwood Stakes?

JEB

That win should have gone to me!

DADDY JOE

Get your head out of your ass, boys! SIT DOWN, SHUT UP AND LISTEN.

*(pause)*

GRAN DAD JOE

The last time we had a family meeting this serious we got in to moon shining. Now it may be time to get out.

JAKE

*(angry)*

Why do you keep saying that!

JEB

Let 'em talk!

JAKE

He's talking like federal agents are living up at the house!

DADDY JOE

Do I have to come over there and solder your mouth shut!

LILLIE

Don't talk to the boy like that.

*(pause)*

GRAN DAD JOE

*(calm)*

I'm just saying we're at a cross road boys.

GRAN DAD JOE *(cont'd)*

*( to JAKE)*

And I'm NOT suggesting we get out of moon shining. At least not tomorrow. But I am suggesting we start planning for a different life.

LILLIE

What about corn farming?

*(everyone stares at LILLIE)*

*(pause)*

GRAN DAD JOE

I think corn farming would be a respectable business.

JAKE

Why don't we just pick cotton with the colored folk!

LILLIE

Jake Weaver don't you talk like that, not in this house!

JEB

What is wrong with you!

*(JAKE moves to bar and taps moon shine. Drinks.  
Pours another.)*

DADDY JOE

Do you really know what's going on here, boy! We're talking about a livelihood that can provide for our family....without spending the rest of our lives in jail!

JAKE

You're serious! Corn farming.

GRAN DAD JOE

We do it now. We've got the land. We just need to do it better.....lots bigger.

JAKE

Count me out! I'd rather go to jail than farm corn.

*(JAKE glances at trophy wall)*

JAKE *(cont'd)*

Look around. What do you see?

JEB

I see a brother that's living in a dream world.

JAKE

I see a race shop.

LILLIE

Don't start with that racing again.

JAKE

Why not? It's in our blood. Most of the bootleggers in North Carolina are making a move to racing.

DADDY JOE

Do you know how much money it takes for you to have fun running in circles?

GRAN DAD JOE

Moon shining affords us the opportunity to race. We can't race without moon shining. It's what they call a catch 22, and we're in it right now.

JAKE

And you think corn will afford you the opportunity to go racing?

JEB

Actually I read where corn can be used as gasoline.

JAKE

*(to JEB)*

Who's the brain child now!

GRAN DAD JOE

Farming corn won't provide us the opportunity to go racing. But it will provide us a livelihood, and maybe down the road we can still be contenders at Northwood.

LILLIE

What's got you worried about moon shining?

GRAN DAD JOE

I can't put my finger on it. Just a feeling.

LILLIE

Does it have anything to do with that soap fella?

GRAN DAD JOE

Maybe.

JEB

What soap fella?

GRAN DAD JOE

Some stranger's been poking his nose around the track

JEB

And he wants to sell us some soap?

GRAN DAD JOE

Not sure. He claims to have some connection to that fella that's organizing that stock car racing group in Daytona.

JEB

*(to DADDY JOE)*

Is that the stranger I saw you talking to near the winners circle?

GRAN DAD JOE

*(surprised)*

You were talking to this fella at the track?

DADDY JOE

Some stranger was congratulating me on the win, not sure who it was.

GRAN DADDY JOE

What else did he ask you?

DADDY JOE

Nothing else. That's all he said. Congratulations on that win.

GRAN DAD JOE

I've got Lillie doing some checking on this fella prior to him dropping by the shop tomorrow. In the meantime, I don't want no one talking to no strangers.

JAKE

What if that guy really does have something to do with stock cars? Hell, this could be my ticket out.

JEB

Are you trying to get us all thrown in jail?

GRAN DAD JOE

All I'm saying is...give me a chance to check this guy out. His story sounds a little farfetched.

JEB

I'd say. What the hell does soap have to do with racing?

JAKE

Who cares! I'd eat all the Borax in the world if it would keep me racing!

*(pause)*

JAKE *(cont'd)*

Well I would.

GRAN DAD JOE

First of all, we don't even know if this fella is in the soap business. Second, he could be setting us up.

DADDY JOE

Aren't you taking a chance setting the meeting here at the shop.....what if...?

JAKE

*(interrupts)*

Let's give him a taste of white lightning and see what he knows.

JEB

*(sarcastic)*

Why don't we just invite him in and ask him to help us make a few batches.

GRAN DAD JOE

He claims he wants to see our race operation.

LILLIE

Our race operation, or our moon shining operation?

GRAN DAD JOE

Exactly.

DADDY JOE

*(to JEB)*

After your run tomorrow, make sure you drop the flaps on the still, cover the tap, and hide them sugar bags.

DADDY JOE (*cont'd*)

What time's this fella showing up?

GRAN DAD JOE

Sometime in the afternoon.

DADDY JOE

I want you boys to head down to Charlotte early, and be back by noon.

LILLIE

What if I don't hear back from Ed?

GRAN DAD JOE

I guess I'll have to play detective and feel this fella out.

LILLIE

What if Sheriff Buck drops in?

DADDY JOE

I'll handle Sheriff Buck. A few sips of shine and a new fishing pole should keep us busy at Thunder Creek all afternoon.

LILLIE

Let me try and call Ed. He's gotta know something about this fella.

*(LILLIE exits)*

DADDY JOE

Make sure that supercharger is humming by morning inspection. We don't need no foul ups tomorrow.

JAKE

We haven't failed an inspection yet.

DADDY JOE

How's your fuel level?

JAKE

Quarter of a tank.

JEB

We'll fill up tomorrow.

DADDY JOE

Make sure you squeeze every drop of fuel you can into that tank. That supercharger sucks fuel mileage big time. How much shine you boys carrying tomorrow?

JEB

A hundred gallons.

DADDY JOE

That's 800 pounds. Make that suspension extra stiff, you'll need it to carry that load, and still outrun the feds. See you boys in the morning.

*(DADDY JOE exits)*

*(the boys work on supercharger)*

GRAN DAD JOE

I know you love bootlegging, and I know you love racing....but at some point you boys need to grow up and be responsible.

JAKE

Who the hell wants to grow up?

GRAN DAD JOE

Jesus Jake. You're just not listening!

JAKE

I ain't gonna be no corn farmer!

GRAN DAD JOE

One day when you're sitting in jail, no money, and no one to bail you out...maybe then you'll think about growing up.

JAKE

Maybe then I will. But right now I'm thinking about bootlegging to Charlotte and having some fun with those feds!

GRAN DAD JOE

*(to JEB)*

Try and talk some sense into your brother, before you both end up in jail.

*(GRAN DAD JOE exits)*

JEB

Why are you so rebellious? You're just like Abby.

JAKE

Why do you go along with everything? Don't you have this burning desire to just get the hell out of here and make your own way?

JEB

I guess I don't have that selfish streak in me.

JAKE

What is selfish about wanting to bust loose and make it on your own?

JEB

We got responsibilities.

JAKE

We got responsibilities to follow our dreams. And don't give me that crap about me living in a dream world.

JAKE (*cont'd*)

I see you on that race track. I know the feeling you get when you climb into that seat, your heart pumping....the focus and determination.....the keen awareness of what's around you. It's almost like you want to throw up, but in a good way. Then you crank the engine. You feel like part of that car. And suddenly that anxious feeling turns into a focused calm. The flag drops....and right then... something comes over you...and all that calm energy is focused on floating that car around the track. You feel every bump and slide...through every part of your body...your hands....your ass. It's like riding a rail at 100 miles per hour...living on the edge....but in slow motion. And then you take that checkered flag...and you know...you're the best damn driver in the world!

JAKE (*cont'd*)

How can you just walk away from that feeling...to farm corn?

JEB

I live in a real world. A world of obligations...like paying bills....putting food on the table....like raising a family. I guess I just can't walk away like you and Abby. Cuz that feeling....that feeling of walking away...is like losing every single race...even if you win.

JEB (*cont'd*)

Let's finish up. We got work to do.

(*blackout*)

## SCENE 3

(Flaps are down on Copper Still and sugar bags covered. JEB is counting money at the bar. JAKE works on stock car engine.)

*(SHERIFF BUCK enters)*

SHERIFF BUCK

Well, if it isn't the bootleg boys. I heard you boys had quite a run this morning.

JAKE

Hell sheriff, it was the most exciting run we ever had.....we pulled the old Junior Johnson.

SHERIFF BUCK

What the hell's a Junior Johnson?

JEB

Not what...who.

JAKE

He's a bootlegger from over in Wilkes County.

JEB

Word has it he invented the BOOTLEG TURN.....and Jake got to try it out today.

JAKE

Picture this sheriff. We're coming back from dropping loads in Charlotte and the feds are chasing. All of a sudden I jam the brakes...spin the wheel... and throw us into a 180 degree turn...

JEB

...of which my head is hanging out the window...

JAKE

...jam the gas...and wave to Mr. Federal Agent man...as I see him throw off in a ditch in my rear view mirror...like he had the skill to do a bootleg turn.

JEB

In the meantime, I throw on the lights and siren.

JAKE

And as we're coming up along blind bluff...siren blaring...lights flashing...your fellow police is being as nice as can be opening up that road block so we can wave goodbye at 120 miles per hour.

JAKE (*cont'd*)  
(*to JEB*)

Beats growing corn.

SHERIFF BUCK

(*SHERIFF BUCK bends under the hood to inspect engine.  
A white rag is hanging from his back pocket*)

Corn? Don't tell me your Gran Daddy is still trying to talk you boys into farming corn.

(*JAKE pulls the rag from SHERIFF BUCK's back pocket  
and wipes his greasy hands*)

SHERIFF BUCK

What the hell are you doing boy!

(*JAKE unfolds the rag to reveal a Ku Klux Klan hood*)

SHERIFF BUCK (*cont'd*)

That's my Sunday go to meeting KKK hood, boy!

(*SHERIFF BUCK grabs the hood*)

JAKE

You're a member of the KKK?

SHERIFF BUCK

Ah, damn boy! You got grease all over my favorite hood. The whole idea is to look white.

JEB

How long you been a member of the clan?

SHERIFF BUCK

Hell boys. I'm a founding member of the local order...in fact...we're on a recruiting drive if you boys are interested.

*(DADDY JOE enters with fishing pole in hand)*

DADDY JOE

Hey Buck, you ready to sip some smash and catch some fish?

SHERIFF BUCK

I was just trying to recruit your boys here into the local order of the Ku Klux Klan.

DADDY JOE

My boys don't want any part of the KKK.

JAKE

Maybe I do.

SHERIFF BUCK

That's the spirit Jake. I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll let you know when the next meeting is...and I'll even have the Mrs. cut you out a hood....since she's gotta cut me a new one anyway.

*(SHERIFF BUCK tosses dirty hood to JAKE)*

DADDY JOE

*(to JAKE)*

We'll talk about this later.

DADDY JOE *(cont'd)*

*(to JEB)*

You done counting?

JEB

Almost.

DADDY JOE

Do you have what I asked you for?

*(JEB hands DADDY JOE an envelope and continues counting)*

DADDY JOE *(cont'd)*

Here you go, Sheriff. I got some smash in the car. Let's head down to Thunder Creek and see if this new fishing gear can yield us some fish.

SHERIFF BUCK

Pleasure doing business with you boys. I'll be in touch, Jake.

*(LILLIE enters)*

SHERIFF BUCK *(cont'd)*

That's too much pretty for one man to handle.

*(DADDY JOE and SHERIFF BUCK exit)*

LILLIE

That man scares the hell out of me!

JAKE

Sheriff Buck? He don't mean no harm. Hell, most of the time he's drunk anyway.

LILLIE

That's what scares me the most.

JEB

I've finished counting. Good haul this morning.

LILLIE

Let's bring it up to the house for recording and safekeeping.

JEB

*(to JAKE)*

Keep working on that supercharger. We need to squeeze a few more horsepower out for this weekend.

*(JEB and LILLIE exit)*

*(JAKE works on supercharger. He fumbles with tools and gets frustrated. He walks to bar, uncovers tap and pours himself a drink. JACK HONEYWELL innocently meanders into the race shop. JAKE notices JACK, downs his drink, quickly grabs the shotgun and points it directly at JACK. JACK drops his briefcase, and nervously raises his hands)*

JAKE

Take it easy there, Mr. Federal Agent man!

JACK HONEYWELL

But, I'm.....

JAKE

I didn't ask you to talk did I?

JACK HONEYWELL

No, but.....

JAKE

There you go talking again. How about I put a slug in your head and put you in the backyard? Now, what the hell are you looking for here? We're just regular corn farming folk. We ain't doing nothing wrong out here in the country. Have you checked with Sheriff Buck? Well, speak! What the hell's your name and what ya you doing here?

JACK HONEYWELL

My name is Jack Honeywell, and I was supposed to meet...Gran Dad Joe?

JAKE

You're the soap man?

JACK HONEYWELL

Soap man?

*(JAKE puts the gun back in the rack)*

JAKE

Yea, the soap man that's got something to do with stock car racing?

JACK HONEYWELL

Not exactly. I've got something to do with stock car racing, but I'm in the tobacco business.

JAKE

Tobacco business. Ah hell, we had it all wrong. We thought you were a federal agent disguised as a soap man. I knew it didn't make any sense.

JACK HONEYWELL

OK....hey congratulations on your win last weekend. I understand you and your brother are consistent winners over at Ed Northwood's place.

JAKE

Not to mention the best damn bootleggers around.

JACK HONEYWELL  
*(curiously)*

Really.

*(GRAN DAD JOE enters)*

GRAN DAD JOE  
 Jake. Your mom wants you up at the house.

JAKE  
 This here is the fellow from the track.

GRAN DAD JOE  
 Now! And not another word.

JAKE  
*(to JACK HONEYWELL)*  
 Just so you know. We're not really in the corn business....we're in the race business. And we're the best damn racers around.

GRAN DAD JOE  
 House! NOW!

*(JAKE exits)*

GRAN DAD JOE *(cont'd)*  
 Mr. Honeywell?

JACK HONEYWELL  
 Yes. Jack Honeywell.

GRAN DAD JOE  
 My name's Joe Weaver. Just call me Gran Dad Joe. It's a pleasure to meet you sir. Ed Northwood tells me you're in the soap business. What company?

JACK HONEYWELL  
 There seems to be some confusion. I'm in the tobacco business.

GRAN DAD JOE  
 Tobacco business. What's the tobacco business got to do with stock car racing?

JACK HONEYWELL  
 Well sir, that's why I'm here. I work in advertising for the American Tobacco Company located in New Jersey. My calling card sir.

GRAN DAD JOE

New Jersey. With all due respect sir, you do realize you're in the heart of Dixie?

JACK HONEYWELL

Yes sir. But just because our corporate headquarters is located in the North, doesn't mean we don't have the highest respect for the South. We currently have distribution facilities in Durham and Reidsville. And we consider the South a very important market for our tobacco products.

GRAN DAD JOE

I'm still confused.

JACK HONEYWELL

Well sir.....

*(LILLIE enters)*

LILLIE

I'm sorry. I didn't know you were having a meeting.

GRAN DAD JOE

Mr. Honeywell, this is my daughter-in-law, Lillie Weaver.

LILLIE

Pleasure to meet you, Mr. Honeywell.

JACK HONEYWELL

The pleasure's mine, Mrs. Weaver.

GRAN DAD JOE

Mr. Honeywell works for the American Tobacco Company.

*(hands calling card to LILLIE)*

GRAN DAD JOE *(cont'd)*

Why don't you bring down some lemonade from the house. I'm sure Mr. Honeywell could use something to wet his whistle. And while you're up there, why don't you give Ed Northwood a *call*. Maybe his secretary knows his whereabouts.

LILLIE

Sure thing, Gran Dad Joe. I'll be right back.

GRAN DAD JOE

I'm sorry. You were saying.....stock car racing and tobacco?

JACK HONEYWELL

Without getting into all the boring research, stock car racing and tobacco actually make the perfect marriage. It seems people that enjoy a smoke, also love the sport of stock car racing.

GRAN DAD JOE

You mean there's nothing like having a good smoke after winning a good race.

JACK HONEYWELL

Or hanging in the pits, or talking race set up.....

GRAN DAD JOE

....or turning a wrench?

JACK HONEYWELL

Exactly. Our company wants to be part of something new and exciting, namely a new racing series being formed in Daytona Beach, Florida.

GRAN DAD JOE

Isn't that where they run on the beach?

JACK HONEYWELL

That's all about to change. A fella by the name of Bill France has a vision for stock car racing, and we want in.

GRAN DAD JOE

I still don't get it. What's Bill France got to do with the Weaver's?

JACK HONEYWELL

We're looking for winning drivers so we can sponsor them.

GRAN DAD JOE

Sponsor?

JACK HONEYWELL

Our company pays you a sum of money to run a race car in the new series, and in return we get to advertise on your race car. We also have the right to use photographs of your family in advertisements and promotional materials.

GRAN DAD JOE

Pay us to race?

JACK HONEYWELL

If we can come to terms, yes sir.

*(enter ED NORTHWOOD)*

ED NORTHWOOD

Hey Mr. Honeywell, I see you've met the famous Gran Dad Joe Weaver. Without a doubt, one of the best stock car professionals to ever grace a North Carolina speedway.

GRAN DAD JOE

I thought you told me this fella was in the soap business.

ED NORTHWOOD

I think you misunderstood Gran Dad Joe. Do you know how many fellas I have coming to Northwood looking for the Weaver family? I've got everything from soap to tobacco to oil companies.....I mean everybody wants a winner...

ED NORTHWOOD *(cont'd)*

...what'd I tell you Mr. Honeywell? Are these boys the real deal or what? I'd be happy to sit down and discuss dealings with you on behalf of Gran Dad Joe, since I'm more familiar with the intricate business dealings of racing.

*(enter LILLIE, JAKE and JEB. LILLIE serves lemonade)*

LILLIE

There you are, Mr. Northwood. I've been trying you for days and haven't been able to reach you...or your secretary.

ED NORTHWOOD

Secretary.

GRAN DAD JOE

I told Lillie to get a hold of you so we can discuss Mr. Honeywell. Apparently, she hasn't got a hold of anyone yet.....until now I mean.

JAKE

Mr. Honeywell. You came to the right place. Look at these trophies. You ain't gonna find anyone more winningful than me!

JEB

You'll have to excuse my brother, Mr. Honeywell. My name's Jeb. Jeb Weaver. Nice to meet you, sir.

JACK HONEYWELL

I've heard a lot about you, Jeb.

JAKE

You mean you've heard a lot about Jake. People are confusing us all the time.

JACK HONEYWELL

Oh believe me, Jake. I've heard a lot about you as well.

GRAN DAD JOE

So, how long have you been with the American Tobacco Company?

JACK HONEYWELL

Too long to count.

GRAN DAD JOE

And how about the Weaver clan. I always thought we were a small backwoods farming family, let alone famous for winning races at Ed's place.

JACK HONEYWELL

Whether you realize it or not, the racing community is a small knit group. You'd be surprised.

GRAN DAD JOE

I'm not one for liking surprises.

*(enter ABBY)*

ABBY

Surprise!

ED NORTHWOOD

Oh my god, the Circle Belle's back in town!

LILLIE

I thought you were bringing a friend?

JAKE

Fire up the shower!

*(enter OTIS MAY)*

OTIS MAY

Hello everyone.

*(blackout)*

## SCENE 4

(OTIS MAY stands behind the bar.  
ABBY is tinkering under the hood)

OTIS MAY

Do you really know what you're doing under there?

ABBY

Typical man.

ABBY (*cont'd*)

I'm trying to increase the outflow of horsepower by adjusting the inflow of oxygen, thereby increasing the heat input and fuel mixture which will lead to greater cycle work resulting in increased engine output. You want to give it a try?

OTIS MAY

Only if you want me to break it.

ABBY

I can fix anything you can break.

OTIS MAY

You should have told me your family didn't know I was coming.

ABBY

Yea, wasn't that great?

OTIS MAY

Ah, not if you're the only black man in the room....in the deep South.....in a backwoods barn....surrounded by a bunch of surprised white folks.

ABBY

Don't worry. I'll protect you.

OTIS MAY

Right. *Oh, I feel might right safe now Miss Abby.*

OTIS MAY (*cont'd*)

(*looks around the bar*)

How long has your family been moonshining?

ABBY

Since my grandmother passed, farming got tough.

OTIS MAY

What about the feds?

ABBY

The feds are our best customers. It's a business. We supply product to fill a demand in the marketplace, just like they teach us in school.

OTIS MAY

I must have missed that *how to break a law* class.

ABBY

Righteous Otis May! Are you telling me you never broke the law, not even to provide for your family?

OTIS MAY

I might have stretched a lie or two in the name of justice.

ABBY

Lying in the name of justice? I must have missed that *how to lie in the name of justice* class.

ABBY (*cont'd*)

Speaking of hypocrisy, let's have a drink.

(*ABBY pours a couple of shots*)

OTIS MAY

Why do they call you the Circle Belle?

ABBY

It's pretty embarrassing beating all the boys – on the race track.

OTIS MAY

No!

ABBY

Yes!

OTIS MAY

A girl running a stock car?

ABBY

You sound like all those boys at the track, just before I whip their ass.

OTIS MAY

What's it like taking a victory lap?

ABBY

*(playfully)*

Almost as much fun as kissing my trophies. Too winning.

*(they toast and drink. ABBY downs her shot. OTIS MAY sips and cringes)*

OTIS MAY

Oh my God! What is this shit!

ABBY

Shit? This is the best damn moonshine this side of the Mississippi.

OTIS MAY

Oh my God, I can't see. What happened to the lights? White lightning has killed the black man.

*(ABBY playfully chases OTIS MAY)*

ABBY

You better hope that white lightning kills you, before I do!

*(ABBY pushes OTIS MAY. They stumble onto the couch. Their eyes meet in a romantic moment)*

*(enter LILLY)*

LILLY

Oh my. Please tell me you're not trying to kill me Abby, cuz I think I'm having a heart attack.

*(OTIS MAY jumps off the couch)*

OTIS MAY

This isn't what it looks like, Miss Lilly. Abby was just teaching me about superchargers.

LILLY

I do believe that's just what you did to me. Remember young man, the shotguns around here aren't just for show. One surprise a day is about all this family can handle.

ABBY

I do my best.

OTIS MAY

Maybe I should cut my visit short; I sure don't want any trouble.

ABBY

Oh no. We're only here for a few days, and you're not going anywhere. I told you. I'll protect you.

OTIS MAY

I'm not sure that makes me feel much better.

LILLY

So Otis, Abby tells me you met at school.

OTIS MAY

Yes Miss Lilly, Abby was recruiting volunteers to help with student government. She has a way of getting people involved in difficult situations.

LILLY

Difficult situations is putting it politely.

ABBY

Otis is from Boston. He's never been south, so I thought I'd broaden his travels. What do you think so far, Otis May?

OTIS MAY

Great tasting moonshine.

LILLY

You two must be tired of travel. Why don't you head up to the house, clean up and get ready for supper. We've invited Mr. Honeywell and Mr. Northwood.

ABBY

As much as I think that would be fascinating dinner conversation, I'm taking Otis for a little tour; maybe down to Thunder Creek.

ABBY (*cont'd*)

Who is this Mr. Honeywell guy anyway?

LILLY

Jack Honeywell says he's with the American Tobacco Company. Grand Dad and Daddy Joe thinks he may be a federal agent man trying to get to our still earnings.

OTIS MAY

I have a cousin in New Jersey that works for the American Tobacco Company.

ABBY

Where is Daddy Joe anyway? I'm dying to introduce him to Otis May.

OTIS MAY

I'd be honored to meet him.

ABBY

My daddy's as sweet as can be.

*(enter DADDY JOE)*

DADDY JOE

Damn that Sheriff Buck. He's gonna suck us bone dry, and I don't mean moonshine.

LILLY

Daddy Joe, please. No foul talk in front of our guest.

*(DADDY JOE is surprised by ABBY and OTIS MAY)*

*(pause)*

DADDY JOE

*(to LILLY)*

I guess the boys won't be spending much time in the shower.

*(OTIS MAY looks confused)*

DADDY JOE *(cont'd)*

You just love supercharging my ass, don't ya girl. I assume this is your friend from school?

OTIS MAY

Yes sir! Otis May. Nice to meet you sir!

DADDY JOE

I'm assuming you have a death wish?

OTIS MAY

*(chuckling)*

No sir. Just thought I'd broaden my travels.

DADDY JOE

Let me guess. Abby dragged you down here and wouldn't take no for an answer.

OTIS MAY

Something like that.

DADDY JOE

I suggest you watch yourself son, this place don't take kindly to strangers.

DADDY JOE (*cont'd*)

(*to LILLY*)

Speaking of strangers, did you happen to find anything out about our soap man?

LILLY

He doesn't sell soap. He claims he works for the American Tobacco Company.

DADDY JOE

Soap, tobacco...something just don't feel right.

OTIS MAY

Maybe I can help.

LILLY

Otis May's cousin works for the American Tobacco Company in New Jersey.

OTIS MAY

If you'd like, I can try and get a hold of my cousin, maybe he can do some investigating and see if anyone has heard of this man.....Jack Honeywell is it?

DADDY JOE

That would be mighty helpful, son.

ABBY

Righteous Otis May!

ABBY (*cont'd*)

So Daddy Joe, how's the moonshine business?

DADDY JOE

No moonshine business here, darling. Just good honest farmers.

OTIS MAY

If you don't mind, Miss Lilly, I think I'll take you up on that offer to refresh.

LILLY

Absolutely. Come on, I'll take you up to house.

*(OTIS MAY and LILLY exit)*

DADDY JOE

Either that boy is really brave, or really stupid. I'm leaning towards stupid since he followed you here.

ABBY

Not everyone's afraid to venture out into the world.

DADDY JOE

And not everyone has a family to care for, daughters to send to fancy boarding schools, and sons wanting to go racing. Do they teach responsibility at that school of yours?

ABBY

They teach us the responsibility to follow our dreams.

DADDY JOE

Oh right. Dreams. Just like your brother. How about a bite of reality, darling. The noose is tightening around the moonshine business. I suggest you finish your schooling soon missy, cuz one day it'll all come crashing down, and when it does.....

*(ED NORTHWOOD and JACK HONEYWELL enter)*

ED NORTHWOOD

Pour me some smash, Daddy Joe. And one for my friend, Mr. Honeywell.

DADDY JOE

No smash here, Ed, just some of Lilly's homemade lemonade.

ED NORTHWOOD

Oh, don't be so suspicious, I told you, Mr. Jack Honeywell here, doesn't care diddly squat about your bootlegging. Ain't that right, Jack?

JACK HONEYWELL

Congratulations again on your win, Daddy Joe. We met briefly at the track.

DADDY JOE

I'm putting a lot of faith in you, Ed.

ED NORTHWOOD

Don't worry, Daddy Joe. You guys get to know each other, I'll pour the smash.

*(ED NORTHWOOD heads to the bar, uncovers the tap and begins to pour)*

DADDY JOE

You know how I hate surprises.

ABBY

I do my best.

JACK HONEYWELL

Without a doubt. Miss Abby.

ABBY

I understand you're with the American Tobacco Company. What brings you to this neck of the woods?

ED NORTHWOOD

He wants to pay the Weavers to go racing.

ABBY

Really. How exciting. And how did you hear about our little old Weaver clan?

JACK HONEYWELL

The word's out. You know how to win. Why do they call you the Circle Belle?

ED NORTHWOOD

Cuz she's one of the best circle track racers around; used to piss the boys off something fierce. Not a bad bootlegger, neither.

*(ED NORTHWOOD delivers shots. JACK HONEYWELL refuses)*

JACK HONEYWELL

Bootlegger? Really? Sounds dangerous, especially for a woman.

ABBY

I guess I just enjoy putting myself in difficult situations. Aren't you drinking, Mr. Honeywell?

JACK HONEYWELL

I'm not a drinking man. I just don't have a tolerance for such.

*(ABBY approaches JACK HONEYWELL and hands him her shot)*

ABBY

One little old shot ain't gonna kill ya. Welcome to the Weaver clan.

ED NORTHWOOD

To racing and bootlegging!

JACK HONEYWELL

*(noticeable faking)*

Delicious!

JACK HONEYWELL *(cont'd)*

How long you been in the bootlegging business? Looks like a sophisticated operation.

DADDY JOE

You wanna talk racing, fine. We don't talk bootlegging!

JACK HONEYWELL

Sure, Daddy Joe. Sure.

*(enter GRAN DAD JOE)*

GRAN DAD JOE

Dinner time, boys. Let's head up to the house and enjoy some of Lilly's fine fixings.

ED NORTHWOOD

I hope she made some of that fine peach pie! Nothing finer than a little smash and peach pie.

DADDY JOE

*(to ED NORTHWOOD)*

Why don't you escort Mr. Honeywell up to the house. We'll be right on your tail.

*(ED NORTHWOOD and JACK HONEYWELL exit)*

DADDY JOE

There's something off about that guy.

ABBY

I like him. He's kinda cute.

ABBY *(cont'd)*

Well, enjoy your dinner boys.

DADDY JOE

Where you off to?

ABBY

I'm taking Otis May out for a ride. We'll see how brave he is when I barrel through Thunder Creek at 100 mile per hour.

DADDY JOE

Thunder Creek! Are trying to get that boy killed? That's Sheriff Buck's favorite fishing hole.

ABBY

Relax, I'm the Circle Belle remember.

DADDY JOE

*(yelling to ABBY as she exits)*

Gall dang it! This ain't no game were playing, Abby. Sheriff Buck ain't someone you want to be playing with.

*(blackout)*

## SCENE 5

(JAKE is sleeping on the couch. OTIS MAY enters, finds a dirty KKK hood, places it on his head, and then walks over to the couch)

OTIS MAY

*(yelling)*

Good morning, Jake!

JAKE

*(startled)*

What the hell!

*(JAKE springs up off the couch, fumbles and falls. Picks himself up quickly)*

OTIS MAY

*(taking off the hood)*

Scary ain't it.

JAKE

That's a good way to get killed.

OTIS MAY

This place is just full of surprises. You're a member of the KKK?

JAKE

I'm thinking about it.

OTIS MAY

You're thinking about it?

JAKE

Sheriff Buck's got a recruiting drive going. If I join, I get a new hood.

OTIS MAY

That sounds like an offer you just can't refuse.

OTIS MAY *(cont'd)*

You always sleep here out in the barn?

JAKE

Course not! Just a little dull from last night is all.

OTIS MAY

You're not dull, Jake. You're sharp as a tack. Drink a little too much hooch last night?

JAKE

We were celebrating an agreement with Mr. Honeywell. He's paying us to go racing; dropping by the papers later this morning.

OTIS MAY

That's great news! Don't get your hopes up. He's a federal agent.

JAKE

Who says?

OTIS MAY

I did some checking up with my cousin at the American Tobacco Company. No one's ever heard of a Jack Honeywell.

JAKE

Maybe your cousin just don't know all at the American Tobacco Company.

OTIS MAY

He knows a lot of people at the American Tobacco Company. Believe me, Jake. Think about it. This Honeywell fella mysteriously shows up, weasels his way into your still operation.....arranges a meeting to sign some crazy papers, then plans on having the feds crash the party. I mean really, what does tobacco have to do with racing?

OTIS MAY (*cont'd*)

You can be a hero here, Jake.

JAKE

I better warn Daddy Joe. He'll know what to do.

OTIS MAY

You sure you want to do that? Think, Jake.

OTIS MAY (*cont'd*)

Once the word gets out, the moonshining business around here will dry up for a long time. It might be better to just handle the situation yourself. You could be a legend around here Jake. The stuff dreams are made of. What about this Sheriff Buck? Is he someone you can trust?

JAKE

Sheriff Buck's as solid as they come. It's about time he earned some of that fishing money.

OTIS MAY

Fishing money?

JAKE

That's what *he* calls protection money.

OTIS MAY

Sounds to me you need some protecting, Jake. If I was you, I'd get a hold of this Sheriff Buck and fill him in on what's going on. I'm sure he'll want to handle the situation himself.

OTIS MAY

And Jake, careful not to tell no one, or this whole thing could blow up.

*(enter ABBY)*

ABBY

*(to OTIS MAY)*

There you are. Your stomach out of your throat yet?

*(JAKE begins to run out of the barn)*

ABBY *(cont'd)*

Congratulations little brother, I hear your dreams are finally gonna come true. Where ya going?

JAKE

I got things to do!

*(JAKE exits)*

ABBY

Where's he off to?

OTIS MAY

Something about a meeting with a Sheriff Buck. You should have told me your family was involved with the KKK.

ABBY

KKK?

*(OTIS MAY holds up the hood)*

ABBY *(cont'd)*

I swear to you Otis May, we are not even remotely associated with those people.

*(enter DADDY JOE)*

DADDY JOE

Where's your brother tearing off to he hasn't done his chores?

*(DADDY JOE notices the hood in OTIS MAY's hand)*

DADDY JOE *(cont'd)*

You joining the brotherhood?

ABBY

Otis thinks we're involved with the Klan.

DADDY JOE

That's ridiculous. If we were involved with the Klan, you'd be tar and feathered by now.

ABBY

And this here hood?

DADDY JOE

Sheriff Buck must have left it. He's trying to recruit the boys. No way in hell that's going to happen. We missed you two at dinner last night. Looks like we might have gotten past our differences with Jack Honeywell. I'm putting a ton of faith in Ed Northwood. Did you ever get in touch with that cousin of yours?

OTIS MAY

*(tucks hood in back pocket)*

Yes sir, I did. Apparently there is a Jack Honeywell that works at the American Tobacco Company. Something to do with advertising.

ABBY

Righteous Otis May.

DADDY JOE

Thank you, son. That's an elephant off my chest.

ABBY

You believe in dreams now, Daddy Joe?

DADDY JOE

I gotta admit it all feels too good to be true.

OTIS MAY

If you don't mind me asking, what kinda agreement this fella come up with?

DADDY JOE

To the best of my understanding, all we need to do is paint up the car the way he wants it, patch up some clothes and the American Tobacco Company pays us to go racing.

ABBY

How much?

DADDY JOE

It won't replace our still earnings, but it'll help get us farming more. Making the switch away from moonshining won't be easy, but this lick of good fortune is putting us on the right track.

OTIS MAY

You don't plan on running liquor no more?

DADDY JOE

Some things you do out of necessity, son. I suspect you know what it feels like.

OTIS MAY

I suspect I do.

DADDY JOE

Anyway, Ed Northwood and Gran Dad Joe have a better capacity for understanding this stuff. Ed's gonna drop by later to help us understand the papers.

*(LILLY and GRAN DAD JOE enter)*

LILLY

Anybody seen Jake? He's neglecting his chores again.

DADDY JOE

Where *did* he run off to?

ABBY

He went to meet Sheriff Buck.

LILLY

Sheriff Buck?

GRAN DAD JOE

Why do I get the feeling that boy is about to do something stupid.

DADDY JOE

If this is about joining the Ku Klux Klan, I'm gonna tar and feather *his* ass!

LILLY

Ku Klux Klan? Oh my, this is so embarrassing. My apologies Otis May.

OTIS MAY

No worries, Miss Lilly.

*(enter JEB)*

JEB

Hey, anybody seen Jake? I ain't picking up them chores for him again.

ABBY

Your pinhead brother's off to join the KKK.

JEB

I talked him out of that.

GRAN DAD JOE

Well if he's not doing that, then what the hell is going on with Sherriff Buck?

OTIS MAY

I have a confession to make.

*(pause)*

OTIS MAY *(cont'd)*

I might have put it in his head that Mr. Honeywell might be a federal agent.

DADDY JOE

Why the hell would you do that?

OTIS MAY

I don't know. I was just funning with him.....and .....and it just came out.

GRAN DAD JOE

I'm sorry to say it, son....but I think you just opened up a can of worms.

ABBY

And I thought I was full of surprises.

DADDY JOE

Jesus son, if there's one thing you don't want it's a pissed off Sheriff Buck.

DADDY JOE *(cont'd)*

Jeb.....you and Gran Dad Joe head over to the Sheriff station. See if you can cut Jake off. Abby....you come with me. We'll check Sheriff Buck's fishing holes, starting with Thunder Creek. If you don't have any luck, then head back home. Lilly...keep an eye out for Ed Northwood and Jack Honeywell. And make sure Otis May stays out of sight.

OTIS MAY

I'm real sorry Daddy Joe.

*(DADDY JOE, GRAN DAD JOE, JEB AND ABBY exit quickly)*

OTIS MAY *(cont'd)*

I'm so sorry, Miss Lilly. Looks like I really screwed things up.

LILLY

I'm might disappointed in you Otis May. What on earth were you thinking....a smart fella like you? I suspect spending too much time with Abby is starting to produce negative consequences.

OTIS MAY

Please don't blame Abby, Miss Lilly. I take full responsibility and feel mighty bad for the *difficult situation* I put in motion. Abby may be rebellious, but she's got a good heart. All she's striving for is a better life....for all of us. I suspect she gets a lot of that from you.

LILLY

Best you head up to the house.

*(OTIS MAY exits)*

*(blackout)*

## SCENE 6

(LILLY is sitting on the couch)

*(SHERIFF BUCK enters)*

SHERIFF BUCK

Well, looky here. I'm looking for a federal agent man, and instead I find a mighty attractive woman.

LILLY

I think there's been a terrible mistake, Buck.

SHERIFF BUCK

Oh I made a mistake alright. Not courting you before you hooked up with Daddy Joe.

LILLY

That's not what I mean Buck.

*(SHERIFF BUCK sits next to LILLY)*

LILLY (cont'd)

It's about that Jack Honeywell fella.

SHERIFF BUCK

He's a federal agent man. Jake told me all about him. Forget about him.

SHERIFF BUCK (cont'd)

You're aging like a fine smash Lilly.

*(LILLY inches away from SHERIFF BUCK)*

LILLY

Where *is* Jake?

*(SHERIFF BUCK moves closer)*

SHERIFF BUCK

Don't worry about Jake. He's up at the house finding me some fishing money.

*(SHERIFF BUCK begins to lightly caress LILLY)*

SHERIFF BUCK

Yep, aging like a fine smash. Smooth as silk.....sweet smelling.....and good tasting.

*(LILLY jumps from the couch. SHERIFF BUCK pulls her back down)*

SHERIFF BUCK

Where ya off to girl? We're just getting started.

LILLY

*(struggling)*

Stop it Buck!

SHERIFF BUCK

You best be nice to me girl. Sounds like to me your family needs some protecting.

*(LILLY pulls free from SHERIFF BUCK and jumps up from the couch)*

LILLY

Protecting from you!

SHERIFF BUCK

Whoa there lassie.

*(LILLY heads over to bar and begins to remove shotgun from rack. SHERIFF BUCK quickly follows and wrestles gun from LILLIE)*

SHERIFF BUCK

Now what the hell were ya thinking of doing with this here shotgun?

*(enter JACK HONEYWELL)*

LILLIE

Oh, thank god. Mr. Honeywell.

JACK HONEYWELL

Miss Lilly? You ok?

SHERIFF BUCK

Honeywell?

*(SHERIFF BUCK quickly raises and points shotgun at JACK HONEYWELL)*

SHERIFF BUCK (cont'd)

Federal Agent Honeywell.

JACK HONEYWELL

I'm not a federal agent. I'm the soap man.....I mean tobacco man.

SHERIFF BUCK

Stop your babbling. You undercover boys never get your story right. Raise them hands in the air where I can see em.

*(enter ED NORTHWOOD)*

SHERIFF BUCK

What the hell you doing here, Ed?

JACK HONEYWELL

The good sheriff here is under the misbelief that I'm a federal agent.

LILLY

Put the gun down Buck!

SHERIFF BUCK

Quiet your mouth Lilly. Sit your ass down in that couch, RIGHT NOW!

ED NORTHWOOD

What are you doing Buck? This here fella is from the American Tobacco Company, he's no federal agent.

SHERIFF BUCK

I got good information he is.

ED NORTHWOOD

What kind of good information?

SHERIFF BUCK

Jake!

ED NORTHWOOD

*(laughing)*

Jake? That boy couldn't smell a federal agent even if he was bunking with him.

LILLY

I told you Buck, it's all a mistake.

SHERIFF BUCK

*(cocking shotgun)*

I told you to quiet your mouth!

JACK HONEYWELL

Easy sheriff. I'm sure we can straighten this all out with a phone call.

SHERIFF BUCK

Oh I'm sure you'd like that.....calling all your federal buddies.

*(pulls handcuffs out and hands them to ED NORTHWOOD)*

SHERIFF BUCK (cont'd)

Cuff him. I'm taking him for a ride.

ED NORTHWOOD

But sheriff.....

SHERIFF BUCK

DO IT, Ed! I'm not playing.

*(ED NORTHWOOD cuffs him)*

SHERIFF BUCK (cont'd)

How long you known this boy, Ed?

ED NORTHWOOD

Few days.

SHERIFF BUCK

Few days? Did you verify his workplace?

ED NORTHWOOD

Well.....no. Where the hell did Jake hear you were a federal agent?

JACK HONEYWELL

I'm not a federal agent!

LILLY

Otis May.

ED NORTHWOOD

The colored fella?

SHERIFF BUCK

Colored fella!

LILLY

Otis May is Abby's friend visiting from school. He was funning with Jake and misguided him into believing Mr. Honeywell was a federal agent.

SHERIFF BUCK

Colored?

*(enter ABBY, JEB, DADDY JOE, GRAN DAD JOE)*

DADDY JOE

What the hell you doing with that shotgun Buck?

SHERIFF BUCK

Everybody get over there by Lilly, except for you Honeywell. I ain't funning, MOVE!

GRAN DAD JOE

This is all a mistake Buck.

SHERIFF BUCK

*(moves next to JACK HONEYWELL)*

A mistake I'm about to permanently fix. What kinda family you running here, Daddy Joe. I think maybe it's time for Jake to take over the family business. Let's go for a ride, Honeywell. It's time for both of us to disappear.

*(As SHERIFF BUCK begins to hustle JACK HONEYWELL out of the barn, OTIS MAY enters wearing dirty Klan hood and JAKE's clothes)*

SHERIFF BUCK (cont'd)

That hood looks good on you boy.

*(OTIS MAY walks up to SHERIFF BUCK and takes off hood)*

OTIS MAY

Thanks, Buck!

*(Otis May disarms SHERIFF BUCK)*

OTIS MAY (cont'd)

*(pointing gun)*

On the ground, NOW, cuz I'm surely tempted to blow your head off. Hands behind your head!

ABBY

Righteous Otis May!

OTIS MAY

I'm sorry Abby.

*(OTIS MAY pulls badge from pocket and flashes in the air)*

OTIS MAY

FEDERAL MARSHALL. Everybody stay calm and nobody move. You ok, Jack?

JACK HONEYWELL

I was wondering when you were coming. Get these handcuffs off me Ed!

ED NORTHWOOD

So *you are* a federal agent.

JACK HONEYWELL

NO I am not a federal agent, now get these cuffs off me.

OTIS MAY

Mr. Honeywell was kind enough to assist with my investigation. He really is with the American Tobacco Company.

ABBY

You set me up?

OTIS MAY

Some things you just gotta do out of necessity, ain't that right Daddy Joe?

DADDY JOE

I suspect so Marshal May.

ABBY

*(to OTIS MAY)*

I guess you passed that *lying in the name of justice* class with flying colors.

JEB

Are we going to jail?

GRAN DAD JOE

I knew this day was coming!

OTIS MAY

Get up Buck! Nice and slow. No Jeb. The only one going to jail is Buck. We figure he knows every still location in the state, ain't that right Buck?

SHERIFF BUCK

I'm not talking, boy!

OTIS MAY

That's what they all say, Buck. You did the right thing Daddy Joe.

JEB

What's he mean, did the right thing?

DADDY JOE

I cut a deal with the Marshall. I help him catch Buck in exchange for no jail time. Plus, the Marshall forfeited his cut of the tax revenue. Now we can start our new ventures.

LILLY

Ventures?

JACK HONEYWELL

Here you go Daddy Joe. Papers for our agreement to go racing, and papers for our agreement for you to tobacco farm for the American Tobacco Company.

GRAN DAD JOE

Well I'll be damned! This calls for a drink.

*(GRAN DAD JOE and JEB head to the bar and set up drinks)*

OTIS MAY

I suggest you hurry with them drinks. Local agents will be here momentarily to confiscate your still equipment.

*(enter JAKE stumbling and rubbing the back of his head)*

JAKE

I think we got robbed. Someone hit me on the head, and I woke up with no clothes!

*(LILLY helps JAKE to couch)*

GRAN DAD JOE

How about joining us for a drink Marshall?

OTIS MAY

No thanks.

OTIS MAY (cont'd)

*(to ABBY)*

Even though I do hear it's the *best damn moonshine this side of the Mississippi.*

ABBY

Actually, I think it tastes like shit.

OTIS MAY

Let's go Buck. You got some singing to do.

*(OTIS MAY and SHERIFF BUCK exit)*

GRAN DAD JOE

How about you, Mr. Honeywell?

JACK HONEYWELL

No thanks, Gran Dad. I gotta head back, but I can't say it hasn't been exciting. I'm looking forward to our partnership. Call me with any questions Daddy Joe.

*(JACK HONEYWELL exits)*

JAKE

*(still groggy)*

What'd I miss?

JEB

Your dream world just became a reality, little brother.

*(everyone grabs a shot)*

ED NORTHWOOD

Let's hope this France fella knows what he's doing. Who knows, one day stock car racing just may hit the big time.

ABBY

Watch out boys, the Circle Belle's coming!

JAKE

Girls and stock cars, that'll be the day.

JEB

Yea, who's living in a dream world now.

*(they all raise their glasses for a toast)*

GRAN DAD JOE

Here's to the best damn stock car racing, tobacco growing honest folk around.

CURTAIN