

THE LOST PEARL OF THE MOJAVE – EPISODE 11

THE LAST TANGO 1973-1978



EXT. SMITH FAMILY GRAVEYARD – DAY – 1975

A slow, deliberate **PAN** across the Smith Family Graveyard. The desert wind whispers through the dry grass, rattling the sparse creosote bushes.

TOMBSTONES weathered by time stand in solemn rows, each name etched into history: **Cameron Smith** – 1885, **Malika Smith** – 1895, **Wilbur Smith** – 1863, **Emmet Smith** – 1932, **Susan Smith** – 1934, **Jackson Smith** – 1928, **Curtis Smith** – 1954, **Mary Smith** – 1965, **Jack Smith** – 1950, **Floyd Smith** 1969. And now, a **fresh grave**, the dirt still unsettled. **Molly Smith** – 1975. A few wilting flowers rest at the base of her headstone.

Standing by the gravesite are **LEFTY**, **JIM**, and **FLOYD**. Dust clings to their boots. **FLOYD**, Bible in hand,

reads from its tattered pages, his voice low and steady.

FLOYD

(reading) To
everything there is
a season... a time to
be born, and a time
to die...

His voice trails off, the wind carrying the words away. **Lefty** stares at Molly's grave, eyes heavy with loss. **Jim** adjusts his hat, jaw tight. The wind picks up, kicking dust across the gravestones. The camera begins a slow **TILT UP**, revealing the town in the distance.

EXT. OASIS PALMS – CONTINUOUS

The town, once full of life, is now a shell of its former self. **Most of the buildings are boarded up**—stores, even the old diner. The **theater**, abandoned and crumbling, still clings to a piece of its past. The old **marquee** reads: **"DESERT TRIP"** Several **letters are missing**, the sign barely holding onto its last breath. A single tumbleweed rolls down the empty street. The camera **SLOWLY PANS BACK TO THE GRAVEYARD**, the past and present woven together, both fading into the desert.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. CLIFF HANGER TRAILER PARK – EVENING – 1973

SCREEN OVERLAY: “Two Years Earlier – 1973”

A rust-colored sky fades to deep purple over the barren hills. The Cliff Hanger trailer park sits on a dusty bluff overlooking Oasis Palms. The neon sign of the nearby Flamingo Motel flickers uncertainly, half the letters dead. FLOYD’s beat-up FORD GALAXIE WAGON, loaded with boxes and a mattress strapped to the roof, rolls to a stop beside a weathered AIRSTREAM trailer. The car door CREAKS as he steps out, surveying his new kingdom— a faded aluminum can on wheels. He rubs his face, sighing.

Next door, JIM OVERMAN, 40s, wiry with a permanent grease stain on his hands, leans against a white 69 Camaro convertible, sipping a can of Coors. He grins, shaking his head.

JIM

You sure know how
to pick ‘em, FLOYD.

FLOYD

Yeah, well. It’s
either this or
sleeping in the gas
station office.

JIM

At least there, you
got free coffee.

FLOYD

Yeah, and you or my
dad waking me up at
the crack of dawn
everyday, no
thanks.

Jim chuckles, taking another sip of beer. FLOYD pops the trunk and pulls out a battered suitcase. He eyes the view—Oasis Palms spread out below, a skeleton of its former self. The old town lies in darkness, save for a few stubborn businesses clinging to life.

JIM

Used to be you
could hear '66 all
night from up here.
Now it's just wind
and coyotes.

FLOYD

And the occasional
shotgun blast.

JIM

That's just old
Uncle Bill at the
bottom of the hill
scaring off
teenagers from his
junkyard.

FLOYD chuckles, shaking his head. He lugs the suitcase up the short steps into his trailer and flips the light switch. A single bulb flickers on—bare walls, a stained couch, and a rickety table.

JIM

Home sweet home.

FLOYD

Ain't she a beauty?

Jim lifts his beer in salute.

JIM

Here's to new
beginnings... or slow
descents into
oblivion.

FLOYD smirks, pulling a flask from his jacket and clinking it against Jim's can.

FLOYD

Same difference.

They drink in silence, watching as the last neon light in town blinks out.

Floyd takes over the Theater...

EXT. OASIS PALMS – CONTINUOUS

The town, once bustling, is quiet. The only businesses with lights on are the **Motel** and the **Diner**. The theater, still clinging to a piece of its former glory, is now showing less-than-family-friendly fare. The marquee reads: "**Last Tango in Paris Starring Marlin Brando**" The camera **SLOWLY PANS TO THE DINER**, its neon sign buzzing weakly.

INT. DINER – NIGHT – 1973

A flickering neon sign casts a soft glow through the front window of the **nearly empty diner**. The booths, once filled with weary travelers, sit vacant. A slow, mournful rock tune hums from the jukebox in the corner.

At the counter, **LEFTY** and **FLOYD** sit, while **MOLLY**, still in her apron, stands nearby with a pot of coffee. A **notepad** sits on the counter, half-covered in scribbled ideas. The weight of **desperation** lingers in the air.

MOLLY

(rubbing her temples) We gotta do somethin', Louis. The town's dying.

LEFTY

(gruffly) Ain't like we can build a damn highway off-ramp to get folks

to stop.

FLOYD leans back, chewing on a toothpick, deep in thought. His long hair is still tousled from the wind outside.

FLOYD

(smirking) Come on, Dad. We don't need an off-ramp. We need a reason for people to come here. You always said we gotta be a **destination**.

MOLLY

(skeptical) And what, exactly, would draw people here now?

LEFTY

(gruffly, scoffing)
Those girly movies you are showing at the theater ain't exactly packing 'em in now, are they?

FLOYD

(grinning) A

concert. Out in the
desert. Big stage,
bonfires, a **real**
cosmic gathering
under the stars. We
gotta do the thing
I know best—**music.**

Lefty shakes his head, unimpressed.

LEFTY

A concert? Son, who
the hell is gonna
play a concert in
the middle of
nowhere?

FLOYD

(leaning forward,
grinning) My
friends.

A beat. **Lefty raises an eyebrow. Molly watches him carefully.**

FLOYD

Think about it,
Dad. The years I
spent in **Laurel**
Canyon—running with
Cass, Joni, Gram,
The Byrds, even The

Eagles before they
were The Eagles.

I can make some
calls. **Most of
those guys have
stayed here at
least once.** And a
few probably still
owe Ma for room and
board at the **Hotel
California.**

**Molly crosses her arms, nodding—she hasn't forgotten
who owes her money.**

MOLLY

(intrigued) And you
think they'd come?
Just like that?

FLOYD

(chuckling) These
folks live for this
stuff. Gram used to
**drag people out
here** to trip under
the stars. They
love the desert,
Mom. They see it
the way I do.

LEFTY

(grumbling, but
interested) And how
exactly do you plan
to make this
happen?

FLOYD

We'll **set up a**
stage, get a sound
system, and I'll
get the word out in
L.A. We don't need
billboards—we just
let it spread
through the **scene**.

He pauses, then smirks.

FLOYD

We'll call it...
Desert Trip.

Molly glances at Lefty, a flicker of **hope** in her
eyes. Lefty sighs, rubbing his face, then looks out
the window at the **empty street**—the dark storefronts,
the peeling paint, the neon motel sign buzzing like
a dying insect.

FLOYD

(serious, leaning
in) But Ma, if we

do this, we gotta
go all in. The
Hotel and the **Motel**
both need fixing
up. The town needs
to look like a
place worth coming
to, not some
forgotten ghost
town.

These aren't just
any musicians. If
they're coming,
they'll need a
place to stay, a
place to drink,
hell, a reason to
tell their friends
to come next time.

Molly tightens her grip on the coffee pot, her
knuckles white.

MOLLY

(worried, voice
shaking slightly)
Louis, that's **all**
we got left. The
rainy day money. If
we spend it on
fixing up the town
for your friends,

and this flops...

(beat, softer) Then
we got **nothin'**
left.

Silence. The **jukebox clicks**, the next record dropping into place with a dull **thud**. A slow, **haunting** tune begins to play—something about lost chances and dying dreams.

Lefty exhales, **long and deep**. He looks between Molly and FLOYD, then out at the town he built his life around—the town that now sits on the edge of oblivion.

LEFTY

(quiet, then firm)
Well...

(beat, eyes still
on the street)...it
sure as hell beats
sittin' around,
**watchin' this place
rot.**

A moment. FLOYD **grins**—not cocky, but **determined**. Molly lets out a slow breath. She reaches across the table, squeezing Lefty's hand. He squeezes back. The neon sign flickers outside, the hum of the desert night wrapping around them. For the first time in a long while, there's something in their eyes. Maybe

it's **hope...** or maybe it's **desperation.**

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. FLOYD'S TRAILER – NIGHT – 1973

A rotary phone sits on the small kitchen counter of FLOYD's cluttered trailer. The room is dimly lit, a single overhead bulb casting long shadows. A cigarette smolders in an ashtray next to a half-empty bottle of whiskey. FLOYD, barefoot, wearing a faded t-shirt and jeans, sits on a chair, the phone's coiled cord stretched as he leans back, cradling the receiver to his ear.

FLOYD

Glen! Man, how the hell are you? I've been trying to get ahold of you.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. GLEN'S HOTEL ROOM – NIGHT

GLEN, in a plush hotel suite, lounges on a couch, a guitar propped against his leg. A drink in one hand, cigarette in the other. He smirks, recognizing the voice on the other end.

GLEN

FLOYD, you old

bastard. Sorry,
we've been real
busy in the studio.
What kinda trouble
are you into now?

FLOYD

Not
trouble—opportunity
. Listen, I got a
proposition for
you. I'm putting
together a
festival, man. Out
in the desert,
under the stars.
80,000 people.
Bigger than
Woodstock.

Glen exhales a cloud of smoke, amused.

GLEN

(chuckles) Bigger
than Woodstock?
That's a hell of a
claim. Where's this
supposed to happen?

FLOYD

In the Mojave.
Right off old Route
66. Natural

amphitheater,
perfect sound. Wide
open sky. No cops
hassling anyone.
Just the music, the
crowd, and the
stars.

GLEN

Sounds beautiful
man.

FLOYD

Glen. I want you
boys to headline.

Glen swirls the ice in his glass, considering.

GLEN

You serious about
this?

FLOYD

Dead serious. I got
the land. I got
interest. I just
need the right name
to lock it in. If
you sign-on, this
thing blows up
overnight.

GLEN

(laughs) You always
were a dreamer,
FLOYD.

FLOYD

That a yes?

Glen takes a slow sip, thinking.

GLEN

Sure FLOYD. But
you've got to call
Irving, he handles
all that. You let
him know the time
and the place and
if we can make it.
We're in.

FLOYD grins, tapping a cigarette against the table.

FLOYD

Done. You won't
regret it, man.
This is gonna be
legendary.

GLEN

(chuckles) We'll
see. Good luck
FLOYD, Its good to

hear from you.

The line goes dead. FLOYD exhales, staring at the phone, the weight of possibility settling in. Outside, the desert wind howls—fate shifting in the night.

INT. DINER – NIGHT – 1973

The diner hums with the low murmur of a couple of late-night regulars. A neon sign outside flickers, casting a red glow through the front window. The coffee is old, the air thick with cigarette smoke and the scent of fried food.

FLOYD sits across from his father in a booth, LEFTY (LOUIS), who stirs a cup of coffee methodically. FLOYD leans forward, excited, eyes gleaming. Across the diner, at the counter, FLOYD's mother MOLLY SMITH is wiping the counter watching them, concern etched into her face.

FLOYD

Alright, old man,
listen up. My
buddies have agreed
to headline.

LEFTY

(raises an eyebrow)
That right?

FLOYD

Not just that.
Word's out, and now
other bands are
scrambling to get
in. This thing is
happening, Dad.

Lefty takes a slow sip of coffee, watching his son
over the rim of his cup. He sets it down,
considering. His wife shifts uneasily at the
counter, listening in.

LEFTY

Spring of '74, huh?
That ain't far off.

FLOYD

Which is why you
and Mom need to get
moving. The Hotel
and the Flamingo
both need fixing
up. They gotta be
in top shape and I
want to use
Grandma's Apartment
as the hospitality
suite for the
artists. The
penthouse at the
Hotel has the best
views in town and
you'll be able to

see the lights of
the festival from
there. It's going
to be magic!

LEFTY

That so?

FLOYD

This town's gotta
look its best.
Everybody who's
anybody will be
here that weekend.
Dad, we only get
one shot at this.

Lefty exhales through his nose, rubbing his chin. He studies his son, the fire in his eyes. His wife looks down at the counter, worry creasing her brow.

MOLLY

(quietly, but firm)
Louis, where do you
plan on putting
80,000 people? This
town barely holds
500 on a good day.

FLOYD hears her, turns in his seat.

FLOYD

I'm working it out
with McDonnell, we
are going to set up
the stage on the
west side at the
foot of the hill in
Cadiz. The sunset
will light up the
stage when the
opening act goes
on. I can see it
all now. It's going
to be beautiful.

MOLLY

(almost to herself)
This could ruin us.

FLOYD

Ma, this could save
us.

She shakes her head, looking at Lefty.

MOLLY

It's a gamble. A
big one. If it
doesn't work—

LEFTY

(interrupting,
after a beat) He's

serious about this.

FLOYD's mother stares at her husband, searching his face. Finally, she exhales, defeated.

MOLLY

Then I hope you
know what you're
doing.

Lefty turns back to FLOYD, nods.

LEFTY

Alright. We'll get
it done.

FLOYD grins, tapping the table excitedly.

FLOYD

Oh and I need some
money to put down
deposits with the
vendors and the
acts. You won't
regret it.

Lefty shakes his head with a small smirk.

LEFTY

Oh, I probably
will. But what the

hell.

FLOYD's mother sighs, turning back to her coffee as FLOYD and Lefty share a quiet moment. Outside, the neon sign flickers—one step closer to something bigger.

INT. FLOYD'S TRAILER – NIGHT – 1973

FLOYD's trailer is in full-blown chaos. Papers cover the kitchenette table, a stack of invoices teeters on the counter. Two rotary phones sit in front of him, cords tangled, both lines ringing intermittently. A half-empty bottle of Barco whiskey and an overflowing ashtray complete the scene. FLOYD, exhausted but wired on **bennies**, holds one receiver to his ear while scribbling notes with his free hand.

FLOYD

I need a portable
stage, sound
system, and
lighting. Got that?
We need—

Before he can finish, the other phone rings. He swears under his breath, balancing the first receiver between his shoulder and ear as he grabs the second.

FLOYD

Hold on—yeah, go

ahead.

A muffled voice shouts from the other end. FLOYD rubs his temple, the weight of organizing the festival pressing down on him.

FLOYD

No, no, no. I said we need parking for at least ten thousand cars. And security. Jesus, do I have to think of everything?

He takes a deep breath, grounding himself, then switches back to the first call.

FLOYD

Look, just get it done. I don't care what it costs. We need this festival to run smooth. This town's counting on it.

He slams down one receiver, still holding the other.

FLOYD

Alright, where were we? Oh yeah—food

vendors. I need at least twenty. And don't bring me any of that county fair crap. I want quality.

The person on the other end responds, but FLOYD's already reaching for his cigarette, lighting it with shaking hands.

FLOYD

Yeah, yeah, I know it's a tall order. That's why you're the best, right?

He exhales a cloud of smoke, staring at the mess around him. This was his dream, but it was quickly becoming a logistical nightmare.

Suddenly, the phone he slammed down rings again. Without hesitation, he interrupts the current conversation.

FLOYD

I gotta take this—I'm waiting to hear back from Irving.

He switches phones, pressing the receiver tightly to his ear, his expression tightening with

anticipation.

**SPLIT SCREEN – FLOYD’S TRAILER / IRVING’S OFFICE –
DAY**

On one side, FLOYD sits in his cluttered trailer, papers scattered around him, gripping the phone with intensity. On the other, IRVING a meticulous artists’ manager lounges in his sleek, well-lit office in Los Angeles, flipping through a tour schedule with a smirk.

FLOYD

Irving! Listen,
we’ve got a big,
big festival next
spring. Glen’s
agreed to headline,
and we just need to
get the paperwork
in order. It’s
going to be epic!

Azoff leans back in his chair, eyebrows raising slightly.

IRVING

Oh yeah, you don’t
say? So when did
you say this
festival is
happening? And
where exactly?

FLOYD

It's called Desert Trip. I'll be in the Mojave desert near Cadiz. Next Spring.

Irving flips through the tour schedule, his smirk widening as he spots something.

IRVING

Cadiz that's in the Mojave... on the way to Phoenix? Oh, man, I hate to break it to you, FLOYD... but the boys are already booked for a festival in the spring. Sorry but it conflicts directly.

FLOYD

Festival? What festival!

Irving leans forward, enjoying the moment.

IRVING

They are calling it "Cal Jam". It's in

Ontario, California
the radius clause
excludes your
venue. Sorry,
FLOYD. We're gonna
have to pass. I
know the boys love
you...

Floyd grips the phone tighter, his face darkening.

FLOYD

You're kidding me.

Irving chuckles, tapping his pen on the desk.

IRVING

Wish I was. Look,
son you're
ambitious, I'll
give you that. But
they can't be in
two places at once.

IRVING (CONT)

Also a bit of
friendly advice you
might need to
rethink this one...
Cal Jam is going to
be gig. They have
already signed the

Eagles, Deep
Purple, Emerson,
Lake & Palmer, and
Black Sabbath. You
might have trouble
getting any big-
name talent. Sorry,
but good luck kid.

FLOYD runs a hand through his hair, exhaling hard
and slams down the phone

FLOYD

Damn it.

The split screen lingers—FLOYD in his chaotic
trailer, his festival dreams slipping through his
fingers, while Irving casually flips the page of his
schedule, already onto the next deal.

EXT. CLIFFHANGER TRAILER PARK — NIGHT

A small campfire flickers outside FLOYD's trailer,
casting long shadows against the metal walls. FLOYD
and JIM his father's best friend sit in metal clam-
shell chairs, each nursing a cold beer. The desert
wind howls softly in the distance.

JIM

You look like a man
who just had his
heart ripped out.

FLOYD

Might as well have.
Azoff just shot me
down. He said the
Eagles are already
booked for
California Jam.

Jim takes a slow sip, nodding.

JIM

You don't say? I
heard about that
show I think Black
Sabbath is playing.
I love those guys.
Tough break though.
What's plan B?

FLOYD is not entertained by Jim's enthusiasm for the
Cal Jam show.

FLOYD

Hell if I know. But
I'm not backing
down. This festival
is happening, one
way or another.

Jim studies him for a moment, then leans forward.

JIM

Just be careful who

you shake hands
with, FLOYD. I know
you've been talking
to McDonnell.

FLOYD

And?

JIM

That's a bad dude.
And he's the kind
of guy who doesn't
play fair. He's
been in a stalemate
with your dad since
the distillery
closed down. I
guess he's got
other land deals
brewing in LA so
he's been leaving
us alone. But, one
thing I know for
sure, deals with
him come with
strings. Big ones.

FLOYD looks into the fire, jaw tightening.

FLOYD

I don't have a
choice, Jim. This
town needs this. I

need this.

Jim sighs, finishing his beer.

JIM

Then just make sure
you know what
you're signing up
for. You think
you're different?
That you'll be the
first guy to come
out ahead on a deal
with McDonnell?

FLOYD doesn't answer. Jim shakes his head, looking into the fire.

JIM

With guys like
McDonnell... there is
only one winner.
Everyone else
loses.

The fire crackles between them as FLOYD stares into the flames, lost in thought. Jim watches him for a moment, then mutters before taking another sip of beer.

SPLIT SCREEN – INT. FLOYD'S TRAILER / INT.

MCDONNELL'S OFFICE – NIGHT

On one side, FLOYD sits in his cluttered trailer, a cigarette smoldering in an ashtray beside him, phone pressed to his ear. Papers with hastily scribbled notes and maps of Cadiz are spread across his kitchenette table. On the other side, MCDONNELL leans back in a leather chair inside his sleek Los Angeles office, the city lights twinkling beyond the window. A cigar rests between his fingers.

FLOYD

Yes, I want to
lease your land in
CADIZ for a
festival.

McDonnell exhales a thin stream of smoke, smirking.

MCDONNELL

Lease it? Hm.
Interesting. I
gotta admit, FLOYD,
I've been hearing a
lot about this
little show of
yours.

FLOYD

It's not just a
show. It's gonna be
the biggest thing
to ever hit this
part of the desert.

McDonnell chuckles, swirling a glass of whiskey in his hand.

MCDONNELL

That so? And tell me, kid, do you have any idea what it takes to pull something like this off? Permits, logistics, infrastructure?

FLOYD

I've got people working on it. It's all coming together.

MCDONNELL

Yeah, but is it? See, I like ambition, FLOYD, I do. But I don't like betting on the wrong horse.

FLOYD shifts in his seat, gripping the phone tighter.

FLOYD

So what are you

saying?

MCDONNELL

I'm saying I'd be willing to rent you the land... but I need a piece of the backend too. Nothing big maybe 10% of the gross. Also to guarantee my investment, you're gonna need a partner.

FLOYD

A partner?

MCDONNELL

Julian Howe. Ever heard of him?

FLOYD's expression darkens. He's heard the name.

FLOYD

Yeah, I know who he is.

MCDONNELL

(selling) Good. Then you know he's the real deal. He's

an experienced
concert promoter,
knows how to handle
an operation like
this. I'm going to
be honest with you,
you're a dreamer.
And dreamers get
eaten alive in the
desert.

FLOYD grits his teeth, staring at the mess of
paperwork in front of him.

FLOYD

(resisting) I can
do this without
him.

MCDONNELL

Maybe. But I'm not
willing to take
that bet. You want
the land? You bring
in Howe. Tell your
Dad to take my
picture off the
dartboard, and we
will do this
together. I can
help you make this
show a big
success.

Silence lingers between them. FLOYD runs a hand through his hair, exhaling slowly.

FLOYD

And if I say no?

MCDONNELL

Then find yourself
another patch of
dirt, kid.

McDonnell takes a sip of whiskey, waiting for FLOYD's answer. FLOYD stares at the phone, caught between his pride and his dream.

EXT. LOS ANGELES – NIGHT

A neon glow spills onto the rain-slicked streets outside an upscale bar in West Hollywood. Cars roll past, their headlights reflecting off the wet pavement. FLOYD steps out of a taxi, adjusting his jacket, scanning the crowd outside.

INT. UPSCALE BAR – NIGHT

The bar is buzzing with Hollywood types—agents, promoters, musicians. Booths along the wall house conversations laced with backroom deals and big talk. At a corner table, JULIAN HOWE, mid-40s, slick hair, tailored suit, gold chain, with an unbuttoned shirt. Watches FLOYD approach with a bemused smirk.

JULIAN

FLOYD Smith. The
man with the desert
dream.

FLOYD slides into the booth, eyes narrowing.

FLOYD

Guess McDonnell
gave you the
rundown.

JULIAN

He did. And I gotta
say, you're either
crazy or brilliant.
Maybe both.

Julian signals a waitress, ordering two drinks
without asking FLOYD's preference.

JULIAN

So tell me, FLOYD,
why the hell should
I partner up with a
guy who's never
done this before?

FLOYD

Because I've got
the land. I've got
the vision. And

because you want in
on something
nobody's done
before.

Julian leans back, studying him.

JULIAN

You got half of
that right. The
land means nothing
without the
infrastructure, the
connections, the
talent. That's
where I come in.

FLOYD

And McDonnell
insists I need you.

JULIAN

McDonnell knows I
get things done.

The waitress sets down their drinks. Julian raises
his glass, waiting. FLOYD hesitates, then picks his
up. They clink glasses.

JULIAN

Alright, let's see
if your dream is

worth my time.

FLOYD takes a sip, knowing that whatever happens next, he's just stepped into a whole new world.

EXT. OASIS PALMS – EARLY MORNING – SPRING 1974

The sun rises over Oasis Palms, casting golden light across the dusty streets. For the first time in a decade, the town stirs with purpose. Work trucks rumble through Main Street, and the hum of power tools fills the air. The long-neglected buildings are coming back to life.

EXT. HOTEL CALIFORNIA – DAY

LEFTY (LOUIS) stands in front of the weathered Hotel California, hands on his hips, surveying the work ahead. The once-grand neon sign flickers weakly, paint peels from the stucco walls, and the entrance is cluttered with years of neglect.

LEFTY

Alright, boys,
let's make this
place shine.

A CREW of local workers moves in. Some on ladders scraping off old paint, others hauling debris out of the lobby. A truck pulls up with fresh lumber and supplies.

EXT. FLAMINGO MOTEL – DAY

The Flamingo Motel gets the same treatment. Workers replace shattered windows, repaint faded pink walls, and swap out broken light fixtures. The old swimming pool, drained and cracked, is being refilled and patched up. Lefty walks the grounds, nodding in approval as he watches a young worker power-wash years of grime off the motel's iconic sign. He pulls out a notepad, scribbling down more repairs.

LEFTY

A fresh coat of
paint, new beds,
and some working
AC... and she'll be
good as new.

EXT. MAIN STREET – LATER

Shopkeepers sweep their storefronts, fixing up faded signs. The old diner gets a new awning, and the gas station replaces its broken-down pumps. Even the town's small park by the Oasis is getting a trim, the overgrown bushes cut back and benches repainted.

EXT. HOTEL CALIFORNIA – NIGHT

Lefty stands with MOLLY outside the hotel, watching as the new neon sign flickers to life. The town hasn't looked this good in years. He takes a deep breath, wiping sweat from his brow, then smirks.

MOLLY

Do you think he can
really do it?

LEFTY

I mean if FLOYD
pulls this off, we
could even make
this an annual
event. A music
festival would make
this town a
destination for
generations to
come.

He turns, heading back toward the theater, the hum
of renewed energy in the air. Oasis Palms is waking
up, and for the first time in a long while, it feels
like something is happening.

INT. FLOYD'S TRAILER – NIGHT

FLOYD sits at his cluttered kitchenette table,
surrounded by stacks of paperwork, maps, and half-
empty coffee cups. A cigarette burns in the ashtray
beside him. The rotary phone RINGS. He exhales,
rubbing his eyes before picking up.

FLOYD

Yeah?

INTERCUT WITH: INT. JULIAN HOWE'S OFFICE – NIGHT

Julian leans back in his chair, the LA skyline glowing outside his window. He swirls a drink in his hand, his tone casual but firm.

JULIAN

FLOYD, we got a problem.

FLOYD

Define problem.

JULIAN

Ticket sales are sluggish. We need to push the festival to summer or next fall. We're too close to Cal Jam. That show is killing us.

FLOYD grips the phone tighter, his frustration bubbling.

FLOYD

Julian, we've already set the date. People are expecting this.

JULIAN

People aren't
buying tickets,
FLOYD. And the big
names? They're all
locked up because
of radius clauses.

FLOYD

What about our
deposits? I've
already sent you
thousands of
dollars.

JULIAN

Oh don't worry the
acts will honor the
deposits if we
rebook them.

FLOYD

But what if they
have conflicts with
the new date? And
what about the
McDonnell and the
stage and lighting
people? This is
insane!

JULIAN

Settle down FLOYD,

take a breath. Lets
just rethink this.
Sure we'll lose
some deposits but
if we have no
ticket sales you'll
lose everything. We
need to start
thinking about
summer or next
fall.

FLOYD exhales sharply, running a hand through his hair.

FLOYD

We can't wait until
fall and if we do
it in the summer
it'll be too damn
hot. It's a hundred
degrees at midnight
out there in the
summer.

JULIAN

Then let's move it
indoors.

FLOYD

Indoors? What about
our deposits for
the land, stage,

and infrastructure?
I've got everything
riding on this.

JULIAN

Yeah, well the
deposits are non-
refundable. I can
see what I can do,
but they've
committed
resources.
McDonnell's not
going to be happy I
can assure you of
that.

FLOYD clenches his jaw, his knuckles whitening as he
grips the phone.

FLOYD

So we just eat it?

JULIAN

Sorry, kid. That's
business.

Julian takes a sip of his drink, unfazed.

JULIAN

Look, let's scale
it back. Move it to

the theater. We'll
do three nights,
three acts per
night. You'll have
just as big a
lineup, and people
will love it.

FLOYD stares at the stacks of paperwork in front of
him, his dream of a massive outdoor festival
slipping away. He exhales, rubbing his temple.

FLOYD

The theater? It's
supposed to be
under the stars...
and the max we can
hold is 1000
people. How are we
going to make any
money?

JULIAN

Trust me, it'll be
a hell of a lot
easier to pull off.
Next year we'll go
big. This is an
investment kid,
I'll get some top-
level acts and
we'll sell tickets
for each night.

FLOYD leans back, staring at the ceiling. He knows Julian is right, but it doesn't make swallowing the loss any easier.

FLOYD

Fine. We move it.

Julian smirks, satisfied.

JULIAN

Smart move. I'll start making the calls.

Julian hangs up. FLOYD sits there, gripping the receiver for a long moment before setting it down. The festival he imagined is gone. Now, he has to figure out how to salvage what's left.

Julian hangs up. The moment the line goes dead, he immediately dials another number.

INTERCUT WITH: INT. MCDONNELL'S OFFICE – NIGHT

McDonnell sits behind his desk, flipping through paperwork, the dim glow of his desk lamp casting long shadows. His phone RINGS. He picks it up.

MCDONNELL

Yeah?

JULIAN

Gotta hand it to
you, this one was
easy. Kid sent me
every deposit
check, no questions
asked.

MCDONNELL

And you didn't put
a dime down, did
you?

Julian chuckles, swirling his drink.

JULIAN

You were right.
I'll send you your
cut.

MCDONNELL

Couldn't happen to
a nicer guy. He
fucked with my
wells, I have a
long memory. And
now Smith's got
nothing.

JULIAN

Oh, he's still
trying. I convinced
him to do the show

in town. You want a piece of that?

MCDONNELL

No. I'm not gonna push my luck with them. That one is all yours. I still need to be a good neighbor for a little while longer, I've got big plans for CADIZ.

McDonnell leans back, exhaling slowly as he taps his fingers on the desk. Julian takes a slow sip of his drink, grinning. McDonnell chuckles, shaking his head as he hangs up.

INT. DINER – NIGHT

The neon glow from the diner's sign flickers through the large front windows, casting a soft red hue over the worn booths and checkered floor. A few late-night regulars nurse their coffee, and the distant hum of an old jukebox plays a mellow tune.

FLOYD sits in a booth across from LEFTY, his father, who stirs his coffee absentmindedly. Behind the counter, MOLLY, FLOYD's mother, wipes down the register, glancing over as she listens in.

LEFTY

Alright, kid. Let's
hear it. What's
going on?

FLOYD leans forward, grinning despite the stress
hanging on his shoulders.

FLOYD

Here's the
thing—festival's
still happening.
We're just bringing
it home.

Molly raises an eyebrow from behind the counter.

MOLLY

Home?

FLOYD

We are going to
move it to right
here in town. Three
nights at the
theater. It'll be
great. The Hotel
will be booked
solid. The Pool
hall? Full all
weekend. And this
diner? Packed for

breakfast, lunch,
and dinner. Every
dollar stays right
here in Oasis
Palms. McDonnell is
out of the picture.

Lefty sets his spoon down, looking at his son with
cautious interest.

LEFTY

So no 80,000 people
in CADIZ? We can't
fit 80,000 are you
trying to sell me
this as a win?

FLOYD

Better than a win.
We don't have to
deal with McDonell
our overhead is
slashed and because
we're moving it
back a few months,
Julian has locked
in some serious
names. Friday
night? Dave Mason.
Saturday? Dr. John.
And Sunday? My
buddy Jackson
Browne's closing

the show.

Molly pauses mid-wipe, her eyes widening.

MOLLY

Jackson Browne? I
do like him, he's
on the radio every
day.

FLOYD

Exactly. And people
will come out to
see him. They'll
come out for all of
it. Instead of
giving money to
McDonnell, we're
making sure Oasis
Palms gets every
dime.

Lefty leans back, scratching his chin.

LEFTY

I'll be damned.

Molly shakes her head, but there's a hint of pride
behind her skepticism.

MOLLY

You got a way of
talking your way
out of trouble,
FLOYD. I hope this
ain't just a pretty
speech. We've got a
lot riding on this.

FLOYD leans back, exhaling.

FLOYD

It's real, Ma. This
town's about to
have a weekend
it'll never forget.
And this is the
first step to a
brighter future.

Lefty looks at his son, then exchanges a glance with Molly. Neither of them fully trusts how FLOYD got here, but damn if they don't like where it's headed. Headlights shine through the window and Lefty turns his head and shields his eyes from the glare.

EXT. OASIS PALMS – DAY

The sun blazes high over Oasis Palms, casting a golden glow across the bustling streets. Cars line both sides of Main Street, classic muscle cars and VW vans packed with festival-goers. Young adults in denim and fringe walk the sidewalks, soaking in the energy of the town.

A massive banner stretches over the entrance to town, flapping gently in the warm breeze: "1ST ANNUAL DESERT TRIP 1974." Beneath it, vendors sell handmade jewelry, tie-dye shirts, and concert posters.

EXT. OASIS PARK – DAY

The small park is alive with movement—groups of festival-goers lounge on the grass, playing guitars and sharing bottles of wine. A few free spirits, their laughter ringing through the air, splash playfully in the water, some daring enough to skinny dip under the hot desert sun.

EXT. OASIS PALMS THEATER – CONTINUOUS

The theater marquee stands tall, freshly repainted, its bold letters announcing the weekend's legendary lineup: "DESERT TRIP – DAVE MASON – DR. JOHN – JACKSON BROWNE." A crowd gathers outside, snapping photos, holding tickets, and buzzing with anticipation.

EXT. MAIN STREET – CONTINUOUS

The town pulses with energy. The diner is packed, Molly and her waitresses weaving between tables with plates stacked high. The pool hall is full of laughter and the sharp clack of billiard balls. The hotel and motel have "NO VACANCY" signs glowing in their windows.

CUT TO: HOTEL CALIFORNIA PENTHOUSE – DAY

The penthouse of the Hotel California, once MARY SMITH'S lavish residence, now serves as the exclusive green room for the artists and their entourages. Floor-to-ceiling windows reveal a breathtaking view of the desert. Inside, a lavish spread of food and drinks covers an ornate wooden table—champagne bottles pop, exotic dishes are passed around, and laughter fills the air. Bandmates, roadies, and groupies lounge on plush couches, sharing stories and drinks.

DAVE MASON leans against the bar, deep in conversation with JACKSON BROWNE, while FLOYD holds court in an armchair, a glass of whiskey in hand, regaling a small crowd with one of his signature tales. The dream had come to life—maybe not how he originally planned, but in a way that might just put Oasis Palms on the map for good.

FLOYD gets up from his chair, whiskey in hand, and strides toward Dave Mason, extending his hand with a confident grin. Dave shakes it firmly, nodding in approval. Then, turning to Jackson Browne, FLOYD throws his arms around him in an enthusiastic hug. Jackson stiffens, hesitating for a beat before offering a polite, reluctant pat on the back. His eyes dart to Dave Mason, an unspoken understanding passing between them.

FLOYD, oblivious, straightens his jacket and strides out of the room like a king, convinced he belongs among them. Behind him, Jackson watches him go, shaking his head slightly, before returning to his drink. Just then Dave Mason's ROAD MANAGER, a tough biker-looking dude with a neatly tied pony-tail down

his back, corners FLOYD.

ROAD MANAGER

Real nice setup,
FLOYD. The guys
really appreciate
your hospitality.

FLOYD, caught off guard, tries to step around him.

FLOYD

We're glad you're
here. It's gonna be
a great show
tonight. But if you
don't mind, I've
got to go take care
of some last-minute
details.

ROAD MANAGER

About that, I need
the other half of
our money. Before
Dave goes on.

FLOYD

Julian is taking
care of that. You
should go see him
in the box office.

ROAD MANAGER

That's why I'm
here. They told me
Julian left. Dave
needs his money or
he can't play.

HOTEL CALIFORNIA – LOBBY – DAY

FLOYD steps into the lobby from the elevator with the Road Manager trailing behind. A purple neon "Hotel California" sign is illuminated in reverse as he looks out the front window and a crowd of concert-goers pass by.

Worry spreads across his face—this is the dream he fought for. The desert festival didn't die; it was reborn in the heart of Oasis Palms... but something is wrong.

JIM OVERMAN, all cleaned up, approaches, a beer in hand, shaking his head with a smirk.

JIM

Well, I'll be
damned. You
actually pulled it
off.

FLOYD

(nervously) Told
you, Jim. This town
ain't dead yet.

Jim hands FLOYD a beer, and they clink bottles, but the Road Manager grimaces at FLOYD, unimpressed. The moment lingers, tension hanging thick. FLOYD exhales sharply, setting the beer down as he rushes out the front door, the Road Manager on his heels.

INT. BOX OFFICE – NIGHT

FLOYD bursts through the back door of the box office, the ROAD MANAGER close behind. The small room is cramped, ticket stubs and cash boxes stacked high. The BOOKKEEPER, a nervous woman in her 50s, looks up from behind the counter.

FLOYD

Where's Julian?

BOOKKEEPER

(hesitates) He... he left.

FLOYD

Left? What do you mean, left?

BOOKKEEPER

He cleaned out the cash box. Took everything. He said he was going to see you at the hotel.

FLOYD's face drains of color. The ROAD MANAGER tenses, stepping closer.

ROAD MANAGER

So where's our
money, FLOYD?

FLOYD swallows hard, his dream crumbling around him. The noise of the festival outside continues, oblivious to the disaster unfolding inside.

INT. TOUR BUS – NIGHT

The dim interior of the tour bus rocks gently as it rumbles down the highway, leaving Oasis Palms behind. The **marque** of the theater in the distance, growing smaller through the **rear windows**. Festival participants are streaming down the sidewalk to the theater anxious for the show to begin.

Inside, **bandmates and roadies** sit low in their seats, the **air thick with cigarette smoke** and the lingering scent of spilled beer. A few musicians peer out the windows, watching the **crowds still buzzing in the streets**.

At the front of the bus, the **ROAD MANAGER** leans casually against the driver's seat, arms crossed, watching the town disappear.

ROAD MANAGER

(smirking) Sorry
Dave, another
dreamer got in over

his head.

DAVE MASON, reclined in a booth, takes a slow drag off his cigarette and exhales toward the ceiling, shaking his head.

DAVE MASON

They always think
they're the one
who's gonna change
the game. Where are
we headed next?

ROAD MANAGER

(casually) Phoenix,
tomorrow night.

The **bus lurches forward**, picking up speed as it leaves the desert behind. The party continues inside, but outside, **Oasis Palms fades into the darkness**, its brief moment in the spotlight already slipping away.

INT. OASIS PALMS THEATER – NIGHT

The theater is packed to capacity, **a restless sea of concertgoers** packed shoulder to shoulder. The **air is electric**, a mix of excitement and impatience as the crowd waits for Dave Mason to take the stage. A few **chants start in the crowd**—"Dave! Dave! Dave!"—echoing through the historic venue. The **house lights dim**, and FLOYD walks out onto the stage, shielding his eyes from the bright spotlights. He

grips the microphone, forcing a confident smile.

FLOYD

(cheerfully) How we
doin' tonight,
Oasis Palms?!

A **murmur of cheers** ripples through the audience, but the **energy is impatient**. FLOYD clears his throat, shifting on his feet.

FLOYD

(forced enthusiasm)
I know y'all are
excited to see Dave
Mason. We all are.
But unfortunately,
Dave's feeling a
little under the
weather tonight.

The **cheers die instantly**. A few loud groans echo from the back of the crowd. Someone yells out—

HECKLER

Bullshit!

FLOYD **raises a hand, trying to keep control.**

FLOYD

(talking fast) But

don't worry! Your
tickets will be
honored for
tomorrow night's
show, where we'll
have the legendary
Dr. John AND his
special guest—Bruce
Springsteen!

Silence. A beat of confusion. Then—BOOS.

A beer cup flies onto the stage, landing near FLOYD's feet. Another follows. Then a crumpled program. The crowd erupts in frustration.

HECKLER #2

We want Dave Mason,
not some nobody!

FLOYD raises his hands, stepping back as the noise escalates.

FLOYD

(shouting over the
boos) Hey, hey,
c'mon now! We still
got an incredible
weekend ahead—

A plastic bottle whizzes past his head. Security at the edge of the stage steps forward as the scene turns hostile. FLOYD backs away from the mic,

flustered, then **turns and rushes off stage**, **his jacket pelted with another drink** as he vanishes behind the curtains.

INT. BACKSTAGE – CONTINUOUS

FLOYD **bursts backstage**, **breathing hard**, hands on his knees. The **boos continue from the theater**, muffled but relentless.

JIM OVERMAN stands against the wall, **arms crossed**, watching FLOYD with an unreadable expression.

JIM

(dryly) Hell of a
debut, partner.

FLOYD glares at him, but **he's got nothing to say**. The dream is **crumbling faster than he can spin it**.

INT. HOTEL CALIFORNIA PENTHOUSE – NEXT DAY

The once-luxurious penthouse is now **a disaster zone**. Empty bottles, crushed cigarette packs, and half-eaten plates of food litter the tables. The plush furniture is **stained and overturned**. A broken lamp flickers weakly in the corner. Outside the **floor-to-ceiling windows**, the town is **in chaos**. A hastily made **"SHOW CANCELLED" banner** hangs over the theater marquee, **crudely taped** over the original lineup.

On the street below, angry concertgoers **hurl rocks** at the theater's glass doors. The sound of **shattering windows** echoes through the air as the mob

grows more restless. Smoke rises from a burning trash can in the alley. **FLOYD** paces the room, gripping a dead phone receiver, frantically dialing and redialing. **LEFTY** stands near the window, arms crossed, his face grim. **MOLLY** sits on the edge of an overturned chair, rubbing her temples.

MOLLY

(shaking her head)
What are we
supposed to do now?

FLOYD

(frustrated) Ma,
I've been trying to
get Julian, but he
won't pick up the
phone.

FLOYD **slams** the receiver back onto its cradle, fists clenching. **Silence**. Lefty exhales through his nose, staring out at the destruction below. He doesn't need to say it. **It's too late**.

INT. HOTEL CALIFORNIA PENTHOUSE – NIGHT – SIX MONTHS LATER (1975)

The penthouse remains **frozen in time**, still bearing the scars of the festival's collapse. The overturned chairs and empty bottles remain untouched. Dust gathers on the once-luxurious furniture. The vibrant energy of the past is **long gone**. **MOLLY** sits on the couch, wrapped in an old robe, **staring blankly** out

the window. She doesn't move. She hasn't for hours. Her once-sharp eyes are **hollow**, lost in the distant lights of the desert. Outside, Oasis Palms is **lifeless**. The streets are empty, the neon sign of the theater now **dark and flickering**. The dream its mark—on the town and on Molly.

**INT. HOTEL CALIFORNIA PENTHOUSE — BATHROOM — NIGHT
(1975)**

The cabinet **creaks open** as Molly reaches inside, her fingers trembling slightly as they close around a small orange pill bottle. The label is faded, but the name is clear—**Percodan**. Prescribed months ago. Never touched. Until now. She pours herself a **glass of Scooter Rye**, her movements slow and methodical. The bottle **clinks** against the glass as she sets it down. One pill. Then another. Then a third. She washes them down with a long, steady drink.

**INT. HOTEL CALIFORNIA PENTHOUSE — BEDROOM — NIGHT
(1975)**

Molly climbs onto the couch, pulling a throw over her. Her hand brushes against the framed photo on the side table—a picture of her, Lefty, and FLOYD at the diner, taken long before everything fell apart. She **turns off the lamp**, plunging the room into darkness. The distant hum of the wind is the only sound. **She closes her eyes.**

INT. HOTEL CALIFORNIA PENTHOUSE — MORNING

LEFTY stands in the doorway of the suite, **silent.**

His face is pale, his expression unreadable—but his eyes **tell the story**. His world has just shattered. **FLOYD** lingers in the hallway, watching, **his stomach twisting**. He knows the truth. He knows why this happened. And he knows there's **no way to fix it**. Lefty steps forward, reaching out, but stops himself. His shoulders tremble, his breath unsteady. **Silence**. Outside, the town remains still, unaware of what has just been lost.

MONTAGE – THE FALL OF OASIS PALMS (1975-1978)

INT. FLOYD'S TRAILER – NIGHT – 1975

The small trailer is **dimly lit**, filled with the **thick haze of cigarette smoke and something stronger**. A **rotating cast of drifters and lowlifes** lounge on the sagging couch and floor, passing around a joint and a bottle of whiskey. **FLOYD**, glassy-eyed, snorts a **line of cocaine** off a cluttered coffee table. His hands shake as he wipes his nose, grinning at nothing in particular. A **woman whose name he's already forgotten** drapes herself over his shoulders.

WOMAN

(slurring) You're
the king of this
little castle, huh?

FLOYD laughs, raising his drink. The **laugh is empty**.

EXT. CLIFF HANGER TRAILER PARK – DAY – 1976

The **once quiet** trailer park has degenerated into a **drug commune**. Old campers sit on cinder blocks, graffiti scrawled across their sides. Strung-out **junkies** wander aimlessly, while others huddle in corners, whispering, dealing. **A rusted-out VW van** sits in the middle of the lot, music blaring from a busted speaker. The air smells of **weed, sweat, and regret**. A **car** drives past but doesn't stop.

INT. DINER – NIGHT – 1977

The diner, once **a town staple**, is now **empty, rundown**. The jukebox is broken. The neon **flickers weakly**. A drunk slouches at the counter, barely conscious. **MOLLY'S ABSENCE IS FELT**.

LEFTY sits alone in a booth, a **cup of coffee in his shaking hands**. His once-strong frame has withered, his **eyes sunken**. He watches through the window as **FLOYD stumbles across the street**, arm around some **new degenerate**, laughing at nothing. Lefty looks down at his hands, his **fingers tightening into fists**.

FADE TO BLACK.