

DAMNED YANKEE

FADE IN:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Looking through a heat wave on a sweltering summer day, to a dirt road that shows no movement.

The land surrounding the road could very well be described as the middle of nowhere. It's peaceful. Serene.

A sign posted next to the road reads:

"SONGLESS  
POPULATION 256".

The roar of a car's MOTOR speeds closer O.S.

The automobile comes into view as it turns a bend in the road. The back tires spit loose gravel and clouds of dirt behind the vehicle as it speeds closer yet.

INT. CAR - DAY

Forty year old GEORGE, a casually dressed man in a black cowboy hat, sits behind the wheel. He turns the knob on the radio, and gets nothing but STATIC.

The temperature gauge slides beyond "H".

INT./EXT. CAR - DAY

Smoke begins to rise from beneath the hood.

George notices the steam, then quickly focuses on the temperature gauge.

GEORGE

Aw no...

His hand reaches to the passenger seat that's littered with junk food wrappers, and an open map. He digs through the mess, and pulls out a cell phone.

George punches numbers on the phone, then lifts it to his ear. He frowns. Something's definitely wrong.

George lifts the phone up into the air and moves it around, then glances at it again.

GEORGE

Damn!

He tucks the phone into his shirt pocket.

The car continues down the road, until the MOTOR KNOCKS and STALLS out.

The car coasts past the town sign, then stops.

George slides the gear shift into "P", then opens his door.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

George lifts the hood, and a cloud of steam blasts up into his face.

He waves the steam away, then peers at the bottom of the radiator.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

George lifts the trunk and looks inside.

INSIDE THE TRUNK

A spare tire. A few empty plastic milk jugs.

BACK TO GEORGE

He lifts a milk jug, and gives it a shake. George shakes his head, disgusted, then drops the jug back inside the trunk.

GEORGE

Good one, George. Why ride in an air conditioned bus when you can rent a broken down piece a shit car?

He slams the truck closed.

George takes a hard look around... At the empty road... The quiet woods surrounding him...

The long road out of there.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

George lifts a guitar case up and out of the back seat.

He slings the guitar strap across his shoulder, and turns away from the car.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

The bright sun beats down on George as he trudges down the center of the road. Alone.

Perspiration beads on his brow. He swipes it away...

Relief spreads across his face when he notices a big tree with plenty of shade beneath it just a few feet ahead.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

George sits in the shade of the tree. He leans back against the trunk in a world of silence and takes his cell phone from his shirt pocket.

He glances at his cell phone and shakes his head from side to side, definitely not happy.

An O. S. SNAP makes George jolt. He looks around, surprised.

The road is empty. The brush is still.

More O. S. SNAPS bring George to his feet. He turns toward the woods.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

We open up on a flowered pattern. It is moving, twisting from left to right, right to left.

The pattern is on material. A skirt. A long, flowing skirt.

The sun reaches down through a clearing and lights the frame of BECKA (18) in a long, flowing dress. She dances around in silence with a wildflower in her hand.

She lifts her arms, welcoming the sun to her body, and spins a full circle.

Twigs SNAP beneath her feet.

George catches glimpses of Becka between trees as she dances in the nearby clearing.

An idea lights across his face.

George squats down, and opens his guitar case.

A stone PINGS against his guitar.

George slaps the case shut, and has a look around.

A BOY, of about 12, lowers a slingshot from his aim. He slides behind a tree, out of sight.

George rises to his feet, outraged.

GEORGE

Hey! What are you doing!

The wildflower drops from Becka's hand.

George stands by a tree... holding onto his guitar.

The boy peeks out from behind the tree.

George steps toward the boy, and the boy runs away.

Becka's eyes are wide with fear. She shakes her head "no".

George inches toward her.

GEORGE

I'm not going to hurt you. My car  
broke down... It's down the road a  
ways.

Becka shakes her head "no" again. She lifts her index finger to her mouth, motioning for George to be silent, then looks around nervously.

George looks around, and finds nothing.

Becka dashes off into the woods.

George's jaw drops in shock.

GEORGE

No!

He charges after her.

GEORGE

Come back!

George stops. He stands alone.

GEORGE

Please...

George shakes his head, saddened. He turns, and wanders back in the opposite direction.

An O.S. SNAP forces George to look down.

Twigs SNAP beneath his feet. Next to his foot, a dead bird.

In fact there are many dead and decomposing birds scattered about on the ground.

George sprints away. He's outta' there.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

A pick-up truck moves down the road at a leisurely pace.

INT./EXT. TRUCK - DAY

A pair of man's hands steer the wheel.

George moseys down the center of the road, weighed down by his guitar and the heat.

The pick-up drives up behind him.

George looks over his shoulder, and sighs in relief.

He moves to the side of the road.

GEORGE

Hey!

The pickup slows to a stop next to George.

PHIL, a wiry old hillbilly in coveralls sits behind the steering wheel of the truck. He spits out the window.

A wad of brown goo lands next to George's foot.

Phil's smile reveals his tobacco-stained teeth.

PHIL

Boy, what you doin' out here?  
You're libel to get heat stroke in  
this mess.

GEORGE

My car broke down and my cell phone  
won't work. Could you --

PHIL

-- Give you a ride to a garage.  
Sure... Hop on in...

George moves to the passenger door and opens it. He lifts his guitar case into the pickup.

Phil takes the guitar. He gently sets it on the seat, and holds it in place.

PHIL  
We're needen' to be careful about  
this here.

George smiles. He climbs into the truck.

INT. TRUCK - DAY

George sets the guitar on the floorboard, between his legs.

GEORGE  
My name's George. George Davidson.

PHIL  
Howdy.

Phil extends his right hand toward George.

PHIL  
Phil Basher.

They shake hands.

Phil notices dirt on his hand. He pulls it back, brushes it off in embarrassment.

PHIL  
Pardon the dirt. I've been doin' a  
little gardening...

George nods it off, no big deal.

PHIL  
I'm the local peacekeeper of this  
town... The judge. But I reckon you  
can call me Phil.

George smiles, nods in agreement.

GEORGE  
Well Phil I sure appreciate the  
ride.

Phil relates with a slight grin. He pulls the gear shift into drive. They pull away.

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