

ROGER

Roger dances around to Buddy Holly's "Not Fade Away". A record scratch ends the music and he then notices the audience.

ROGER

Hey! What the - oh, it's you. First off, let me tell you that I was and forever will be a huge Buddy Holly fan. That sweet Stratocaster jangling on the AM radio of small town Iowa was almost better than sex - which I had before the crash, thank you very much. I know of which I speak. I got to see it, you know. The Strat. Buddy's Strat. Amazing instrument. Maybe it was amazing just 'cause it was his. The heck I know about guitars. Funny thing, I was actually having sex when Dwyer called me about the late flight out of Clear Lake. What an instrument. I asked him if I could hold it. He asked if I played and I said no. Then he said I could hold the Strat if I let him fly the plane I hesitated but said OK. As I held the guitar I told him there was no way in hell I was gonna let him fly the plane. He laughed and slapped me on the back and asked if he had enough time to catch a little shut eye before the flight. He nodded off. I watched him. I mean, this was Buddy, you know? This man had written the soundtrack to my life. In fact, when Dwyer called me I was having sex and listening to Buddy Holly while we were doing it! I think it was "Rave On". Wow. I love screwing. So Buddy's sleeping. Not a concern about the weather. None of us did. To tell the truth, it wasn't the weather. People think it was, but it wasn't. You know, you can tell when you hold something of quality. That Strat. Buddy's Strat. I strummed around on it. Gosh darn! "Everyday", "Oh Boy", "Peggy Sue" - all born right out of that guitar! I sat there strumming it. It was like I was in church - don't tell my momma I said that. Runway guys were getting the plane ready. The other guys were out smoking or something. I watched him sleeping. Ever watch your idol napping? Ever watch God take a nap while you're clutching his Stratocaster? I couldn't think of anything to say. Just watched him. The thing

about flying is you get disoriented easily, especially at night. Damn. His music made me feel like I could fuck all night! I've never said that word before, but gosh darn, nothing else really captures it, you know? This guy, sleeping right here, basically my age. He deals in notes and instruments and has rattled me to my core, and I deal in knots and instruments and fuck-all if I don't know my instruments as well as he knows his. Mine are altimeter and indicators and such, his are six strings on a Fender. Waylon came in. That guy. He damn near wrestled away Buddy's guitar right out of my hands. Thought I was some kind of crook. He woke up Buddy, who said it was all right that I was holding his guitar. Damn Waylon. He left. Took the guitar. Guess my little Beechwood didn't have enough room. I told Buddy I had to go through my preflight checklist. Like a playlist, Buddy said. Kind of. Different instruments.

Blackout.

PREFLIGHT

Buddy Holly is down right talking into a pay phone. There's a couch center stage. A guitar sits atop its case. There's a suitcase near it.

BUDDY

Socks, underwear, T-shirts - Hell, I got nothin' clean! Damned ol' laundromat was closed. ... Oh, I don't even know where we're going. Something something Minnesota, I guess. ... I am frazzled, honey. I'm 'bout worn out as a work boot.

Two bags are thrown in from stage left. Then Waylon and Tommy fall in. They're wrestling.

BUDDY

I know, honey, but I ain't gettin' on that damn bus again. I just ain't! (to Waylon and Tommy) Can you guys keep it down?

WAYLON

C'mon, Bud. Just lettin' off a little steam.

TOMMY

Have to 'fore we get cooped up on that damn bus again like a buncha hens.

BUDDY

Thought you two were gettin' on the plane.

WAYLON

Nah. J.P.'s goin instead. He's got the flu and all.

BUDDY

Tommy?

TOMMY

I lost that damn coin toss to Ritchie. Goddamn tricky bastard. I think he cheated me!

BUDDY

Enough of that! I got Maria on the phone here.

TOMMY

Sorry, Bud.

Tommy pulls on his flask. Waylon picks around on Buddy's guitar.

BUDDY

I better go, hon. We're just waitin' on the pilot now. And Ritch and J.P., I guess. ... I don't know. Had to get the poor fella out of bed to fly us. Should be here any minute. ... OK. Love you too. Bye-bye. (to Waylon and Tommy) Boys, if you ain't gettin' on this here plane, then what the heck are you doin' here?

TOMMY

We came to drop off some laundry.

WAYLON

Mainly just T-shirts, socks, and underwear.

TOMMY

Figured you'll be there in no time. We'll be on that damn bus for 12 hours.

BUDDY

That damn bus.

TOMMY

Damn thing.

BUDDY

Damn that bus!

WAYLON

To hell with that damn bus!

BUDDY

J.P. oughta be on that damn bus if he's got the flu.

TOMMY

Probably got the flu on that damn bus.

BUDDY

I know I ain't gettin' on that damn bus. S'all I know.

WAYLON

Here's my whites, Bud.

TOMMY

I got all mine mixed together. I don't care too much, long as it's clean.

BUDDY

Hate to break it to you boys, but I don't think there's room on the plane for all your laundry.

WAYLON

Oh, hell, Buddy!

TOMMY

C'mon!

BUDDY

Well, me, Ritch, J.P. - he's a big fella - the guitars...

TOMMY

The guitars? You don't need the guitars.

WAYLON

You ain't giggin' up there are you? We'll take 'em on the damn bus with us.

TOMMY

Lots of room for guitars on that damn bus.

WAYLON

'Specially if J.P. ain't on it.

Buddy collapses on the couch.

BUDDY

Oh, hell. Fine. Leave your dumb ol laundry. But just so you know, if it's too crowded on the plane then your dirty bullshit is first to go.

WAYLON

Ain't no good anyway. All dirty and everything.

TOMMY

Thanks, Bud.

BUDDY

Yeah, yeah. I'll be damned. Doin' laundry for the band. You know, I hope your damn bus freezes!

WAYLON

Well I hope your damn plane crashes!

TOMMY

See you in wherever north.

As Waylon and Tommy exit, they bump into Roger.

WAYLON

Look out, fella! This sum'bitch'll hogtie you for fun.

TOMMY

Soooney!

They leave. Buddy is napping. Roger is in awe.

ROGER

Wow. There he is. Buddy Holly, sleeping at the Clear Lake Municipal.

Roger taps Buddy's shoulder.

ROGER

Mr. Holly? Mr. Holly?

BUDDY

Yeah. What? Who are you?

ROGER

I'm Roger. Your pilot.

BUDDY

Oh, good. Nice to meet you, Roger. Mind if I nap a little? Still waitin' on two more.

ROGER

OK, Mr. Holly.

BUDDY

Call me Buddy.

ROGER

OK, Buddy.

Buddy goes back to sleep. Roger watches him.

ROGER

Mr. - um Buddy?

BUDDY

Yep.

ROGER

Do you mind if I - would it be all right if I - if I
held your guitar?

BUDDY

Do you play?

ROGER

No, sir.

BUDDY

I'll let you play my guitar if you let me fly your
plane.

ROGER

I don't think I can do that, Mr. Buddy. I...

BUDDY

Just kiddin'. Help yourself.

Roger picks up the guitar and cradles it.

ROGER

Unbelievable. My golly...

BUDDY

Just call me Buddy.

Waylon enters stage left.

WAYLON

What the hell you doin', boy?

ROGER

Mr. Holly said I could -

*Waylon grabs the guitar. He and Roger struggle
over it and wake up Buddy.*

BUDDY

What the...

WAYLON

Buddy, this boy is tryin' to steal your guitar!

BUDDY

Damnit, Waylon! He's the pilot. I said it was OK.

WAYLON

Oh. Sorry, Bud.

BUDDY

Thought you were on the damn bus.

WAYLON

I was but we forgot your guitar. Came back to pick it up before we pulled out.

BUDDY

Oh, right. Roger, do you mind?

ROGER

Oh. Oh! Of course.

Roger puts the guitar in the case with solemn reverence.

WAYLON

Hurry up, boy! It ain't the damn baby Jesus.

Roger snaps the case and hands it to Waylon.

WAYLON

All right. We're off then. Oh, Bud? I hope you wouldn't mind putting a little bleach in with those whites, I'd 'preciate it.

BUDDY

Bye, Waylon!

Waylon exits. Buddy sleeps.

ROGER

Well, I suppose I should go through my preflight checklist.

BUDDY

Like a playlist.

ROGER

Kind of, yeah.

BUDDY

Little bit different. Different instruments and such.

ROGER

Hmm. Yeah. I guess so.

Pause.

ROGER

You can hop on board whenever you like, Buddy.

BUDDY

Think I'll stay here and get a little shut-eye 'til
Ritch and J.P. show up.

ROGER

OK, Mr. - Buddy.

*Roger grabs the bags and exits. Buddy remains
sleeping. Long silence. Lights fade out.*

The end.