

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

The Founder

BEST ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY

Robert Siegel



THE FOUNDER

by
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INT. ED'S DRIVE-IN - KITCHEN - DAY

The kitchen of a drive-in restaurant outside St. Louis. It's 1954. Traveling salesman RAY KROC (52) stands before a sample MIXING MACHINE, making his pitch to the OWNER.

RAY KROC

Now, I know what you're thinking: "What the heck do I need a five-spindle for? I barely sell enough shakes to justify my single spindle." Right? Wrong.

(BEAT)

Mr. Paulsen, are you familiar with the notion of the chicken and the egg? I mention it because I believe it's applicable here: Do you not need a Multimixer because you're not selling enough milk shakes? Or are you not selling enough milk shakes because you don't have a Multimixer? I firmly believe it's the latter. You see, your customers, they know that if they order a shake from your establishment, it's going to be a terrific wait. They've ordered one before, and by golly they're not gonna make that mistake again. But if you had, say, a Prince Castle-brand five-spindle Multimixer with patented direct-drive electric motor, you could greatly increase your ability to produce delicious, frosty milk shakes fast. And before long, mark my words, dollars to donuts, you'd be selling more of those suckers than you can shake a stick at. Increase supply, demand will follow. Chicken and the egg. You follow my logic? Of course you do. You're a bright, forward-thinking fella who knows a good idea when he hears it.

(BEAT)

So whaddaya say?

ON THE OWNER-- pondering thoughtfully.

OWNER

Nah.

(BEAT)

Thanks anyway.

EXT. ED'S DRIVE-IN - PARKING LOT - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc lugs the heavy Multimixer back to his car. He lifts it into the trunk, wincing from his bad back.

INT. KROC'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Kroc sits in his car checking his APPOINTMENT BOOK. His next sales call: **DEE DEE'S DRIVE-IN - 1 P.M.**

He checks his watch. It's **12:05**. He turns on the car, pulls into a customer spot in front of Ed's Drive-In.

He looks at the MENU BOARD, taking in the vast, seemingly random assortment of items: BBQ beef sandwiches, hot tamales, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, chili dogs, etc.

INT. KROC'S CAR - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc sits in his car, waiting for his food. He looks at his watch. It's **12:50**. He lets out a heaving, exasperated sigh.

KROC'S POV, the view out his windshield: a rowdy TEEN-HANGOUT SCENE. Rock-and-roll blasting from cars; female CARHOPS on rollerskates dodging grabby male patrons; leather-jacketed, cigarette-smoking hoodlums smacking each other around.

Kroc is the oldest customer by a mile--and seemingly the only one with anywhere to be. He HONKS his horn, summoning his CARHOP. She comes skating over holding a tray of Cokes.

RAY KROC
Miss, how much longer?

CARHOP GIRL
Should be any minute.

RAY KROC
You said that 20 minutes ago.

CARHOP GIRL
I'm sorry, we're real--

She JUMPS-SQUEALS, startled. The tray of Cokes goes flying into the car, SPILLING ALL OVER KROC'S LAP. Several glasses and plates fall on the ground, SHATTERING.

Carhop Girl spins around, sees a GUY behind her cracking up. He just pinched her butt.

CARHOP

Dennis!
 (re: Kroc, soaked)
 Look what you made me do!

DENNIS

Sorry, gramps.

Dennis scampers off toward his pack of laughing friends. The carhop goes chasing after him, mad but not actually mad.

ON KROC-- looking down at the pool of bubbly brown liquid in his lap. He HONKS, leans out the window.

RAY KROC

Could I get some napkins?

No one hears him.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

ANGLE ON the pants drying on the shower's curtain rod.

RAY KROC (O.S.)

It's going great.

CUT TO: the NEXT ROOM. Kroc sitting on the bed, on the phone.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

Lot of good leads today. Real strong leads.

Through the phone, a tiny passive-aggressive sigh.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

(prickly)
 What?

ETHEL KROC (O.S.)

Nothing. That's wonderful.

RAY KROC

There's tremendous interest.

ETHEL KROC (O.S.)

I'm sure there is.

RAY KROC

You don't believe me?

ETHEL KROC (O.S.)

Of course, Ray. Why wouldn't I?

SHORT TIME LATER--

Kroc sits on the edge of the bed, roiling from the call. He takes off his shirt, undressing for bed. His bare torso bears numerous surgery scars: heart, gall bladder, etc.

He reaches over to the night stand, grabs a fifth of Canadian Club. Unscrews the cap.

SHORT TIME LATER--

Kroc, in pajamas, stands before a PORTABLE PHONOGRAPH. He drops the needle on a record.

SHORT TIME LATER--

Kroc lies in bed in the darkened room, eyes closed. A soothing baritone fills the air--

RECORD (O.S.)

*Nothing in the world can take the
place of persistence. Talent will
not; nothing is more common than
unsuccessful men with talent.
Genius will not; unrewarded genius
is almost a proverb.*

ANGLE ON record sleeve next to the phonograph: **"THE POWER OF
THE POSITIVE" BY DR. CLARENCE FLOYD NELSON**

RECORD (CONT'D)

*Education will not; the world is
full of educated derelicts.
Persistence and determination alone
are omnipotent.*

QUICK CUTS to other snippets of the record:

RECORD (CONT'D)

*So I grabbed that brush, and I
shined up those boots so bright,
Pastor Walker could see his
reflection in them!*

Later--

RECORD (CONT'D)

*The lesson there being, it's not
what you do but how you do it. Any
job worth doing is worth doing
well.*

Later--

RECORD (CONT'D)
*As I like to say, it's not the size
of the dog in the fight, it's the
size of the fight in the dog.*

Later--

RECORD (CONT'D)
*Misfortune is just a stepping stone
to fortune.*

Later--

RECORD (CONT'D)
*And I said to myself, "Clarence,
you've got to muddle through this!"*

Later--

RECORD (CONT'D)
*How a man handles adversity is the
true measure of a man.*

Later--

RECORD (CONT'D)
*Heck, anyone can paddle in a
sunshower!*

INT. JOE'S DRIVE-IN - KITCHEN - NEXT DAY

The kitchen of another drive-in, Kroc pitching to the OWNER.
The scene is virtually identical to the previous day's.

RAY KROC
Increase supply, demand will
follow. Chicken and the egg. You
follow my logic? Of course you do.
You're a bright, forward-thinking
fella who knows a good idea when he
hears it.
(BEAT)
So whaddaya say?

EXT. PARKING LOT - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc lugs the sample Multimixer back to his car.

INT. KROC'S CAR - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc is pulled up to a customer spot in front of Joe's Drive-In. The scene before him is very much like the one at Ed's Drive-In, a riot of teenage rowdiness.

He looks at his watch. It's **12:45**. He HONKS, shouting out to no one in particular:

RAY KROC
Could someone tell me when my...

He trails off as a female CARHOP approaches with a tray. She hooks the tray onto his car door.

CARHOP
Enjoy.

She heads off. He lifts the cover off his plate, primed to dig in. His face falls at the sight of the hamburger beneath. He leans out the window, honks.

RAY KROC
I ordered the barbecued beef!

He's howling into the void.

EXT. MERRIMAN'S DRIVE-IN - LATER

Another drive-in. Kroc with the OWNER.

RAY KROC
Mr. Merriman, are you familiar with
the notion of the chicken and the--

OWNER
No, thank you.

The Owner disappears into the restaurant. Kroc, shut down, lugs the Multimixer over to his nearby car, heaves it into the trunk. He takes a swig from his FLASK.

EXT. MERRIMAN'S DRIVE-IN - MOMENTS LATER

Kroc at a pay phone, dialing a long-distance number.

JUNE MARTINO (O.S.)
Prince Castle, how may I help you?

RAY KROC
Hi, June.

INT. PRINCE CASTLE SALES - CONTINUOUS

A modest office in a Chicago high-rise. At the reception desk is secretary JUNE MARTINO. (Intercut as necessary.)

JUNE MARTINO

Ray. How's it going down there?

RAY KROC

Fine, swell, lot of interest.

JUNE MARTINO

That's terrific. Hold on, I'll fetch your messages.

She grabs a pile of messages off the desk.

JUNE MARTINO (CONT'D)

Let's see: Gene Rafferty from United Aluminum, says he needs to reschedule Friday... Ed Nance calling again about the refund... a lady from March of Dimes about a donation... oh, and we got an order. Six.

RAY KROC

Six?

JUNE MARTINO

Some drive-in out in California.

RAY KROC

One place? That's impossible.

JUNE MARTINO

I've got the slip right here.

RAY KROC

You must've misunderstood. Give me the number, I'll straighten it out.

EXT. MERRIMAN'S DRIVE-IN - SHORT TIME LATER--

Kroc pours a few nickels into the pay phone, dials a number off his wrist.

YOUNG EMPLOYEE (O.S.)

Hello?

RAY KROC

Good afternoon. May I please speak to the owner?

YOUNG EMPLOYEE (O.S.)
Which one?

RAY KROC
I'm sorry?

YOUNG EMPLOYEE (O.S.)
Dick or Mac?

RAY KROC
Um, whomever's available.

The guy puts the phone down, heads off. Through the receiver, Kroc hears the sounds of an insanely busy--and efficient--kitchen. *"Order up!"... "I need six fries!"... "Patties up!"*

DICK MCDONALD (O.S.)
This is Dick.

RAY KROC
Hello Dick, this is Ray Kroc from Prince Castle Sales. I'm phoning because someone there placed an order with us for some Multimixers.

DICK MCDONALD
Yes, yes, that was me. How soon can you get 'em out here?

RAY KROC
Well, that's actually why I was calling. I believe there may have been a miscommunication between--

In the background, someone SHOUTS SOMETHING to Dick.

DICK MCDONALD
Freezer! Top shelf, left side!
(back to Kroc)
Sorry.

RAY KROC
My secretary's under the impression you wanted six.

DICK MCDONALD
You know what? I think that's a mistake.

RAY KROC
That's what I figured. What kind of drive-in would be making 30 shakes at a--

DICK MCDONALD
Better make it eight.

ON KROC-- flabbergasted. Another background SHOUT.

DICK MCDONALD (CONT'D)
What's that, Al? There's a brand-
new box in the storeroom!
(to Kroc)
Look, now isn't the best time.

RAY KROC
I'm sorry, I'm still a bit--

DICK MCDONALD
You know where to send 'em, right?
San Bernardino, California. Corner
of 14th and E.

RAY KROC
To anyone in particular?

DICK MCDONALD
Just the store is fine. McDonald's.

Another BACKGROUND SHOUT distracts Dick.

DICK MCDONALD (CONT'D)
I gotta go. Just get those mixers
out here ASAP, okay? Thanks!

Click. Kroc stares at the receiver. What the hell was that?

EXT. MERRIMAN'S DRIVE-IN - MOMENTS LATER

Kroc stands over a U.S. ROAD MAP on the hood of his car. He unfolds it, opening the map westward. (Note: This part of the map is not well-worn like the Midwest; it's virgin territory for Kroc.)

Kroc's eyes drift westward to California. They land on a small town 60 miles east of Los Angeles: San Bernardino.

Kroc looks at the whole country. He notices something. A road directly connecting St. Louis to San Bernardino. Route 66.

ON KROC-- staring at Route 66. A single, unbroken line running from where he is now to that mysterious city out in Southern California.

EXT. ROUTE 66 - DAY

Kroc driving west on Route 66. Cars, the open road, a limitless horizon. The sky, the country, the whole world seems to open up. His heart swells with possibility. The vastness excites his brain. This must be how Lewis & Clark felt. And then...

EXT. SAN BERNARDINO CITY LIMITS - ROUTE 66 - DAY

Kroc arrives in San Bernardino. A drab, dusty little town on the edge of the desert. Hardly the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow he was expecting. He continues along Route 66, heading toward the center of town.

SHORT TIME LATER--

Kroc driving. He sees the line before he sees the restaurant. A long line, hundreds of people, snaking toward a HAMBURGER STAND in the distance.

ON KROC-- taking in the strange sight of people out of their cars, queued up in a line leading toward a self-service window. It's a distinctly FAMILY CROWD, lots of parents with their children. Not a teenage delinquent in sight.

He parks, gets out. Unsure what to do, he gets in the line. He looks off at the restaurant, checks his watch. It's 1:15.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Don't worry. It moves fast.

ANGLE ON the WOMAN in front of him. No sooner does she say this than the line moves. Kroc shuffles forward 10 feet.

SHORT TIME LATER--

Kroc in line, significantly further along. He looks at his watch. It's 1:19.

EXT. MCDONALD'S - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc at the front of the line. He checks his watch. 1:23.

CASHIER (O.S.)

Welcome to McDonald's, may I take your order?

Kroc looks up, sees a CASHIER looking at him with a friendly smile. Like all the other cashiers, he's male and wholesome as apple pie.

RAY KROC

Um, yes...

He looks at the MENU BOARD. It has just FOUR ITEMS: burgers, fries, shakes, and Coca-Cola. A radical departure from the typical sprawling drive-in menu.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

Hamburger, fries, and a Coca-Cola.

CASHIER

45 cents, please.

Kroc hands him two quarters.

CASHIER (CONT'D)

And five cents is your change.

Kroc barely has time to put the nickel away when--

CASHIER (CONT'D)

Here you are.

The cashier hands him a paper sack. Kroc looks at it with confusion.

RAY KROC

What's this?

CASHIER

Your food.

RAY KROC

I just ordered.

CASHIER

(shrugs, smiles)

And now it's here.

Kroc peers into the bag. Lo and behold, inside is a burger, fries, and a Coca-Cola. He sees it's all wrapped in PAPER.

RAY KROC

("Where are the"--)
Silverware? Plates?

CASHIER

You just eat it straight out of the wrapper. Then throw it all out.

ON KROC-- bewildered. He takes the bag, unsure what to do.

RAY KROC

So now I bring it back to my car?

CASHIER

Most folks do. Or you could eat it
in the park, at home... anywhere
you like.

Kroc nods. This is all so strange to him. He turns, heads toward his car. On the way, he spots an EMPTY BENCH. He impulsively takes a seat.

Kroc reaches into the bag in his lap. He takes out the hamburger, noting the paper packaging. He unwraps the burger, looking at it, sniffing it. It looks and smells wonderful.

As he's about to take a bite, out the corner of his eye he notices in a nearby car... a GORGEOUS BLONDE.

KROC'S POV: The blonde, biting into a hamburger. As she chews, a look of ecstasy comes over her face. She closes her eyes, her head tipping back a bit, borderline orgasmic.

ON KROC-- staring at the blonde.

MOTHER (O.S.)

May we?

Kroc is shaken out of his reverie by a FAMILY OF FOUR looking to sit on the bench. He slides over, making room.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Thank you.

Kroc's attention shifts from the blonde to the family. He discretely watches as the mother passes out burgers to her two young kids. The kids bite into them, "mmm"-ing audibly.

ON KROC-- observing this family of four, wholesome as can be, devouring their delicious McDonald's hamburgers.

Kroc looks at the burger in his own hand, takes a bite. As he chews, his eyes roll back in his head.

MAN (O.S.)

How is everything?

Kroc looks up, sees a MAN standing before him. His necktie and demeanor suggest manager.

RAY KROC

This is the best burger I ever had.

MAN
We aim to please.

The man smiles, extends a friendly hand.

MAN (CONT'D)
Mac McDonald.

RAY KROC
Ray Kroc.

They shake. Kroc pulls a BUSINESS CARD from a pocket, hands it to him. McDonald looks at it, unsure what to make of it:

**RAY KROC - PRINCE CASTLE SALES CORP. - 2310 WACKER DRIVE,
CHICAGO, ILL.**

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
The Multimixer fella.

MAC MCDONALD
(it clicks in--)
You spoke to my brother.

Mac looks again at the card, noting the Chicago address.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
What brings you way out here?

RAY KROC
Oh, I was just in Los Angeles.
Meetings. Business. Figured as long
as I was in the neighborhood, I'd
swing by, say hello.

MAC MCDONALD
Well, I'm glad you did. Welcome!

Kroc's eyes drift to the busy, humming restaurant.

RAY KROC
Quite an operation you got here.

MAC MCDONALD
Care for a little tour?

There's nothing Kroc would like more.

INT. KITCHEN - SHORT TIME LATER

A bustling kitchen, organized as a series of stations.

MAC MCDONALD (O.S.)

Speed...

ON MAC-- leading Kroc through the kitchen.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)

That's the name of the game.

They come to a massive GRILL manned by THREE COOKS.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)

First stop for every McDonald's hamburger is the grill, manned by three cooks whose sole job is to grill those all-beef beauties to perfection.

Kroc watches the mouth-watering beef sizzling on the grill.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Meanwhile...

He leads Kroc to an adjacent station, where two DRESSERS stand before a rotating Lazy Susan with 24 BUN TOPS on it.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)

As the patty cooks, our "dressers" get the bun ready.

DRESSER #1 puts pickle slices and onion on each bun--

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Every McDonald's hamburger gets two pickles, a pinch of onion...

--while DRESSER #2 applies a squirt of ketchup and mustard with a pair of trigger-operated CONDIMENT GUNS.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)

...and a precise shot of ketchup and mustard.

RAY KROC

(re: condiment guns)

Where'd you get those things?

MAC MCDONALD

We made 'em.

RAY KROC

Made them?

MAC MCDONALD

Custom built. Whole kitchen is.

ON KROC-- utterly amazed.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
 (resuming tour)
 Next it's off to the finishing
 station...

ANGLE ON the Lazy Susan, carrying 24 fully dressed bun tops,
 traveling along a belt toward a FINISHING STATION.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
 Where it all comes together.

A pair of FINISHERS put cooked patties onto the fully dressed
 bun tops, then put on bun bottoms and neatly wrap it up.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
Voilà!

The finished product is fed into an angled metal sleeve that
 slides them to the front counter, where cashiers can grab and
 bag them with ease.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
 A fresh and delicious hamburger,
 grill to counter in 30 seconds.

ON KROC-- dumbfounded by what he's seen. He looks at Mac.

RAY KROC
 How?

MAC MCDONALD
 Did I come up with all of this?
 (sly smile)
 I didn't.

Kroc is confused.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
We did.

Kroc follows Mac's eyes to a MAN coming toward them.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
 Dick McDonald. My brother.

Kroc grabs Dick's hand, enthusiastically shakes.

RAY KROC
 I just have to say, what you've
 done here is nothing short of--

DICK MCDONALD
(to Mac, ignoring Ray)
The fries.

MAC MCDONALD
What about 'em?

Dick leads Mac toward the FRENCH FRY STATION. Kroc follows along. Dick plucks a fry off the drying rack, hands it to Mac, who pops it in his mouth.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
Perfect.

DICK MCDONALD
They're five percent too crisp.

Dick takes a fry, tastes it. Frowns.

DICK MCDONALD (CONT'D)
I think we should drop to two minutes, 50 seconds.

MAC MCDONALD
That's what you had it at before.

DICK MCDONALD
400, not 375. Higher temp, shorter cook.

Mac takes another taste.

MAC MCDONALD
I really think they're spot-on.

RAY KROC
(to Dick)
If it makes any difference, they're the best fries I've ever tasted. Crispy golden brown on the outside, fluffy on the inside. Not too oily, perfectly salty and crunchy.

Dick looks at Ray, taking note of him for the first time.

DICK MCDONALD
Who are you?

MAC MCDONALD
This is that Multimixer fella you spoke to.

RAY KROC
Ray Kroc, Prince Castle Sales.

Kroc hands Dick his card. Dick gives it a cursory glance.

DICK MCDONALD
How soon you figure we can expect
'em?

RAY KROC
I'm sending them Blue Label Air.
You should have it early next week.

DICK MCDONALD
Good.

With this, Dick abruptly walks off. Ray gives chase.

RAY KROC
Wait!

He catches up, grabs Dick's arm.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Let me take you out to dinner.

DICK MCDONALD
(jokey)
You're really not my type.

RAY KROC
You and your brother.

Mac, a few feet away, comes over, curious.

MAC MCDONALD
What for?

RAY KROC
I'm gonna shoot straight with you
fellas. This restaurant is the most
remarkable thing I've seen in all
my years in the food-service
industry. And believe you me, I've
seen it all. I want to know
everything about it. Where it came
from, how you thought of it.
(BEAT)
Please. Tell me your story.

INT. STEAKHOUSE - EVENING

Kroc sits across from the brothers in a corner booth, rib eye
steaks in front of all three.

MAC MCDONALD

There wasn't a job in all of Manchester. All of New Hampshire. So we packed our bags and headed west. To Hollywood. I wanted to be in the movie business. And Dick, well, he wanted to be...

DICK MCDONALD

Employed.

MAC MCDONALD

We landed jobs driving trucks for Columbia Pictures. After a few years, we had enough saved up to buy our own little piece of show business. A little movie theater out in Glendora. Which would've been swell, except for the small matter of timing. It was September of '29. One minute we're screening "Gold Diggers Of Broadway", the next it's "Brother, can you spare a dime?" Literally.

DICK MCDONALD

I couldn't.

MAC MCDONALD

Nobody in town was making any money. Except this one fella, Wylie Reid. Ran a hot dog and root beer stand. People still gotta eat, right? So we decide to set up our own stand, hot dogs and orange juice, out in Arcadia.

EXT. ARCADIA - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A YOUNG DICK AND MAC manning their dusty, roadside HOT DOG STAND during the Great Depression. A smattering of CUSTOMERS.

MAC MCDONALD (V.O.)

It did okay, enough to keep us off the bread line, but we were hardly doing gangbusters. There just weren't enough people in Arcadia.

BACK TO PRESENT--

MAC MCDONALD

Meanwhile, one town over is San Bernardino, the place is growing at a terrific clip. We want to relocate, but we've got no money for a new stand. That's when my brother here gets one of his brilliant ideas. Tell him, Dick.

Dick throws Mac a "That's okay, you tell him" nod.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)

"Why don't we move the stand we've got? Put it on a truck!"

(BEAT)

Genius, right? Except one small problem. On the road between the towns, there's an overpass. The building doesn't clear. I figure that's it, we're done for. But then Dick says...

Another nod of deferral from Dick.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)

"Why don't we saw the restaurant in half?"

EXT. ROAD - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Dick and Mac driving an old flatbed Ford. On the back is the stand, SPLIT IN TWO. The truck goes under an overpass, narrowly clearing.

MAC MCDONALD (V.O.)

We truck the darn thing over in two pieces, put it back together!

BACK TO PRESENT--

Kroc guffaws with amazement.

MAC MCDONALD

We move the building, set up shop. But before we open, we decide to give the place a little tweak. It's 1940. Drive-ins are all the rage, the hottest thing going. I say Dick, we gotta get in on this. Dick says sure.

(MORE)

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
 Two months later, we open for
 business...
 (show-biz hands)
"McDonald's Famous Barbecue!"

EXT. MCDONALD'S FAMOUS BARBECUE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The brothers' proto-McDonald's, up and running. Pretty
 CARHOPS in tasseled short skirts and Western boots hustle
 about serving customers.

MAC MCDONALD (V.O.)
 We've got a 27-item menu, barbecue
 slow-cooked in a real pit out back.
 Uniformed waitresses bring the food
 straight out to your car. It does
 gangbusters. Going great guns. But
 then, sales start to level off.

BACK TO PRESENT--

DICK MCDONALD
 The drive-in model, as we learn,
 has a few built-in problems.

Kroc leans in, eager to hear their take on this.

DICK MCDONALD (CONT'D)
 For starters, there's the customer
 issue. Drive-ins tend to attract,
 shall we say, a less-than desirable
 clientele.

MAC MCDONALD
 Teenagers.

DICK MCDONALD
 Hot rodders and hooligans. Juvenile
 delinquents in blue jeans.

Kroc nods, all too familiar.

DICK MCDONALD (CONT'D)
 Then there's the service. It takes
 forever and a day for your food to
 arrive. And when it finally does--

RAY KROC
 It's completely wrong.

DICK MCDONALD

The carhops are too busy dodging grapes to remember you wanted a strawberry phosphate, not cherry.

RAY KROC

If they remember at all.

MAC MCDONALD

Then there's the expenses. Payroll is high due to the large staff required. Dishes are constantly getting stolen or broken.

DICK MCDONALD

Tremendous overhead.

MAC MCDONALD

But one day Dick has a realization. Going over the books, he notices something. The bulk of our sales come from just three items: Burgers, fries, soft drinks.

DICK MCDONALD

87 percent.

MAC MCDONALD

We say to ourselves, what the heck are we doing monkeying around with all this other stuff? Focus on what sells.

Kroc nods. Yes.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)

And that's just what we do. Brisket, gone. Tamales, gone. And we don't stop at the menu. We look at everything. What else don't we need?

DICK MCDONALD

Turns out, quite a lot.

MAC MCDONALD

Carhops.

DICK MCDONALD

Walk up to a window. Get your food yourself.

MAC MCDONALD

Dishes.

DICK MCDONALD
All paper packaging. Disposable.

MAC MCDONALD
Jukeboxes, cigarette machines.

DICK MCDONALD
Drive out the riff-raff.

RAY KROC
(totally in sync)
Create a family-friendly
environment!

MAC MCDONALD
And finally, the biggest, most
important cut of all... the wait.

DICK MCDONALD
Orders ready in 30 seconds, not 30
minutes.

MAC MCDONALD
We decide to tear down the kitchen.
Rebuild. Reconfigure. Rethink the
whole dang thing. And you're gonna
love how we do it. Tell him, Dick.

DICK MCDONALD
The tennis court?

MAC MCDONALD
He brings me out to this tennis
court, draws an outline in the
dirt. Exact dimensions of our
kitchen.

EXT. TENNIS COURT - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A TENNIS COURT, somewhere in San Bernardino. Mac watches as
Dick carefully draws a KITCHEN OUTLINE on it with a stick.

MAC MCDONALD (V.O.)
We bring in a bunch of employees,
have 'em go through the motions,
making pretend burgers and fries.

--An invisible kitchen, YOUNG EMPLOYEES mimicking the moves,
trying to get it right.

MAC MCDONALD (V.O.)

Dick's chasing after them with the stick, marking up where all the equipment should go. They do it over and over, hashing out the moves, choreographing like it's some sort of crazy burger ballet.

--Over and over. It's starting to get dark.

DICK MCDONALD (V.O.)

Finally, after about six hours of this, we get it just right.

--Workers making pretend burgers and fries in perfect sync.

DICK MCDONALD (V.O.)

A symphony of efficiency. Not a wasted motion.

BACK TO PRESENT--

DICK MCDONALD

We take the layout to a builder, custom build to exact specs.

MAC MCDONALD

Ta-da. The Speedee System is born. The world's first-ever system designed to deliver *food fast*. It's totally revolutionary.

DICK MCDONALD

And a complete disaster.

EXT. MCDONALD'S - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The grand opening. The hungry and the curious pulling up.

MAC MCDONALD (V.O.)

Opening day, people pull into the lot, immediately start honking when no carhop comes over. We try to explain the walk-up window. They're bewildered. Furious. *"Whaddaya mean I gotta get out of my car?"*

BACK TO PRESENT--

MAC MCDONALD

Most of them just cuss us out and drive off. The few that stick around are mad as heck about having to eat off paper and discard their own trash.

DICK MCDONALD

We may have underestimated the learning curve.

MAC MCDONALD

By five o'clock, Dick's calculating the cost of converting back to drive-in. But me, I'm not quite ready to throw in the towel. Going back to my Hollywood roots, I say to myself, "We gotta go big with this. We gotta put on a show." I tell Dick I want to throw a grand re-opening. A gala premiere to put Louis B. Mayer to shame.

EXT. GRAND RE-OPENING - EVENING (FLASHBACK)

The fast-food equivalent of a Hollywood-style premiere.

MAC MCDONALD (V.O.)

We rent a bunch of spotlights, the same ones we used to truck around to premieres in the Columbia days. I get sparklers, a juggler for the kiddies--it's an event. People show up in droves. And then...

DICK MCDONALD (V.O.)

The flies.

--An ominous cloud gathers over the restaurant. A SWARM OF INSECTS. They swoop down in unison, as if in attack mode.

DICK MCDONALD (V.O.)

They must've been drawn by all the lights.

MAC MCDONALD (V.O.)

Millions of 'em. Looked like something out of Exodus.

--Customers running, screaming. Swatting.

DICK MCDONALD (V.O.)
 The Pharaoh would've released the
 Israelites.

BACK TO PRESENT--

MAC MCDONALD
 It's a total disaster. Towel time.
 (BEAT)
 The next morning, Dick and I meet
 up to discuss going back to the old
 format. As we're talking, there's a
 knock at the service window. Dick
 goes over, sees a little boy
 standing there. He wants a bag of
 burgers.

INT. MCDONALD'S - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Dick at the service window, looking at a YOUNG KID. His nose
 barely clears the counter.

DICK MCDONALD (V.O.)
 I tell him we're closed.

MAC MCDONALD (V.O.)
 But he's cute, I feel bad for him,
 so I fire up the grill, make him a
 batch. And as he's heading off...

--A car pulls into the lot.

MAC MCDONALD (V.O.)
 A car pulls up.

--A second car.

MAC MCDONALD (V.O.)
 Then another.

--A third car.

MAC MCDONALD (V.O.)
 And another. Before you know it,
 there's a line around the block.

--A LINE OF CUSTOMERS stretching into the distance.

MAC MCDONALD (V.O.)
Word has spread.

BACK TO PRESENT--

DICK MCDONALD
And it's off to the races.

MAC MCDONALD
We're an overnight sensation.
Thirty years in the making.

ON KROC-- absorbing all of this, blown away.

Mac gives Kroc a modest little shrug.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
So that's our story.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Kroc lies awake in bed, buzzing, unable to sleep.

EXT. MCDONALD'S - NEXT MORNING

Dick and Mac pull into the McDonald's lot in Dick's car.
They're startled to see--

Kroc, sitting out front. He approaches their car. Before Dick
can fully roll down his window:

RAY KROC
Franchise.

DICK MCDONALD
Beg pardon?

RAY KROC
Franchise, franchise the thing.
It's too good to just be one
location. There ought to be
McDonald's everywhere. Coast to
coast, sea to shining sea. And I'm
just the man to help you do it.
I've spent the better part of my
life criss-crossing this country. I
know every highway and byway, every
city and every town.

DICK MCDONALD
Mr. Kroc...

RAY KROC
Let me just say one thing. One more
thing.

(MORE)

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

I want to confess something to you boys. I'm not out here in California on any business meeting. I'm out here for you. You're what brought me out. A few days ago, I was standing outside a filling station in St. Louis, Missouri staring at a U.S. road map, staring at a long, white, unbroken line called Route 66. I took my finger--

DICK MCDONALD

Mr. Kroc--

RAY KROC

I took my finger, and I traced that line from where I was standing all the way out to California, where it ran smack-dab into this place we are now. As I stared at that line, something told me to follow it. Something told me to get in my car and see what's out there at the other end. And when I laid eyes on your hamburger stand yesterday, all those people lined up to purchase your remarkable product, I knew it was--

DICK MCDONALD

We already tried!

INT. MCDONALD'S - BACK OFFICE - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc and the brothers stand before a U.S. MAP.

DICK MCDONALD

Five.

ANGLE ON map. Five PUSH PINS are stuck in it, clustered around California and the Southwest.

DICK MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Three in Southern California, one in Sacramento and one in Phoenix.

(BEAT)

And that's all there'll ever be.

RAY KROC

Why?

DICK MCDONALD

Two words: Quality control. It's almost impossible to enforce standards from afar.

MAC MCDONALD

Those places were a mess. Filthy kitchens, inconsistent menus...

DICK MCDONALD

Sacramento was selling burritos.

MAC MCDONALD

To watch your precious creation get mismanaged like that. Your *name*.

DICK MCDONALD

Put Mac in the hospital.

Kroc looks at Mac, surprised.

MAC MCDONALD

Diabetes and extreme stress don't mix.

A BEAT as Kroc absorbs this.

RAY KROC

But if you had somebody in charge of supervising.

MAC MCDONALD

We did.

RAY KROC

What happened?

DICK MCDONALD

He obviously didn't do a great job.

RAY KROC

So replace him. With someone better.

DICK MCDONALD

Our energies are better spent making this place the best it can possibly be.

MAC MCDONALD

Better one great restaurant than 50 mediocre ones.

RAY KROC
Sure, but I still think if you had
the right--

DICK MCDONALD
Thank you, we're not interested.

RAY KROC
Someone as committed to quality as--

DICK MCDONALD
Thank you.

Kroc backs off. A BEAT of awkward silence.

Kroc's eye goes to something else on the wall... a BLUEPRINT.
The building has towering arches on each side.

RAY KROC
What's that?

DICK MCDONALD
A blueprint.

RAY KROC
Those:

Mac follows Kroc's eyes to the arches.

MAC MCDONALD
It's a way to make the place stand
out when you're driving past.

DICK MCDONALD
"The Golden Arches" I call 'em.

Kroc stares at them, fascinated. It's a crazy, radical (and
kind of brilliant) thing to stick on the sides of a building.

RAY KROC
Who thought of that?

MAC MCDONALD
That's pure Dick magic right there.

Dick's gaze is still on the arches, clearly proud.

RAY KROC
Ever do one like that?

DICK MCDONALD
Just one...

Dick looks at the U.S. map. A lonely push pin in the middle of Arizona.

DICK MCDONALD (CONT'D)
Phoenix.

EXT. ROUTE 66 - SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA/ARIZONA - DAY

Kroc driving back along Route 66, taking in the scenery.

SERIES OF SHOTS: Kroc passing through various small towns, each with a Main Street running through it. On every Main Street, we see the same two things: a church and courthouse.

Glimpses of various churches and courthouses. Churches topped with crosses. Courthouses with American flags.

ON KROC-- processing, wheels turning.

EXT. ROUTE 66 - FLAGSTAFF, AZ - NIGHT

Kroc driving through Flagstaff. He passes a road sign: **I-17 SOUTH - PHOENIX - NEXT RIGHT**

He takes an impulsive detour.

EXT. CENTRAL AVENUE (PHOENIX) - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc drives down Phoenix's Central Avenue. He sees the arches before he sees the restaurant.

Kroc pulls into the empty lot (the restaurant is closed). He gets out, looks up at the arches. They're lit up and glowing. Glorious, magical.

He does a slow lap around the building, taking in the arches from all angles. Halfway around, the shifting perspective causes the arches to meet. They form a giant "M" (the McDonald's logo as we know it today), 30 feet high.

ON KROC-- standing before the "M", bathed in its golden, glowing light. Like Moses before the Burning Bush.

EXT. KROC'S HOUSE (DES PLAINES, IL) - DAY

A modest home in the Chicago suburbs. Kroc pulls up in his car.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

ETHEL (53) is at the table, eating dinner by herself.

RAY KROC (O.S.)

Ethel!

Kroc comes bursting in, burning with excitement.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

I've seen the future!

Ethel's face falls.

ETHEL KROC

Again?

RAY KROC

I saw a restaurant, Ethel. It's like nothing you've ever seen. They've got this system, the Speedee System...

ETHEL KROC

Ray...

RAY KROC

Just hear me out.

ETHEL KROC

I'm too old for this.

RAY KROC

This place, it's like something sprung from the mind of Henry--

ETHEL KROC

I can't do it. Not again.

RAY KROC

Don't you want to be a part of greatness?

ETHEL KROC

I want to be part of a cruise.

(BEAT)

All our friends are taking trips, enjoying their golden years. And us, we're still scrapping and scraping like a couple of 25-year-olds. When do we get to start living, Ray? When do we finally get to start enjoying our lives?

RAY KROC
Ethel, this place--

ETHEL KROC
It's *revolutionary*.

RAY KROC
(bristles at her sarcasm)
As a matter of fact...

ETHEL KROC
It's never going to get any better,
Ray. We're never going to have
anything more than we have right
now. And that's okay.

(BEAT)
What's not okay is us wasting our
lives reaching for some brass ring
we're never going to grab.

RAY KROC
(flash of anger)
Maybe if I had a wife who had an
ounce of vision. Who gave me an
ounce of support.

ETHEL KROC
Support? Support?

This sets her off--

ETHEL KROC (CONT'D)
All I've done is support you! I've
had your back through thick and
thin, through one cockamamie idea
after another. The wax cups, the
Fold-A-Nook, the Multi-Mixer, on
and on, every last one. And you
have the nerve to say I don't
support you?

RAY KROC
(backing off, chastened)
I'm sorry.

ETHEL KROC
I've believed in you, Ray. Our
whole marriage. Long past the point
any rational, thinking person
would've.

RAY KROC
You're right.

ETHEL KROC
 I've sacrificed, I've saved. Made
 do, gone without. My belt's so
 tight, I'm out of notches.

RAY KROC
 You're right.

ETHEL KROC
 "Support"?
 (BEAT)
 How dare you?

Kroc just stands there in shamed little-boy silence.

EXT. MOVIE THEATER - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc steps to the ticket window.

RAY KROC
 One ticket, please.

The marquee reads **MAGNIFICENT OBSESSION.**

INT. MOVIE THEATER - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc sits in the theater, the light of the screen flickering
 off his face. In his hand is his flask. He takes a discrete
 swig.

INT. PRINCE CASTLE SALES - KROC'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

June Martino watches Kroc pace, ringing phone to his ear.

EMPLOYEE (O.S.)
 McDonald's Hamburgers.

RAY KROC
 Dick McDonald, please.

EMPLOYEE (O.S.)
 He's not available at the moment.

RAY KROC
 Mac, then.

The employee puts the phone down, goes off to check. Through
 it, Kroc hears what sounds like a BIG CROWD.

EMPLOYEE (O.S.)
I'm sorry, he'll have to call you
back. We're real busy right now.

Kroc glances at his watch, puzzled by the commotion.

RAY KROC
What time is it there?

EMPLOYEE (O.S.)
10 o'clock.

RAY KROC
(thrown)
What time do you open?

EMPLOYEE (O.S.)
11.

ON KROC-- amazed. They don't even open for another hour.

INT. JOHNSON'S DRIVE-IN - KITCHEN - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc out on a drive-in sales call, giving his standard spiel.

RAY KROC
(flat, distracted)
Mr. Johnson, are you familiar with
the notion of the chicken and the
egg? I mention it because I think
it's applicable here.

EXT. JOHNSON'S DRIVE-IN - PARKING LOT - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc hauls the sample Multimixer back to his car, shoves it
in the trunk. He takes a swig from his flask, staring off.

INT. MIDWAY AIRPORT - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc steps to the TWA ticket counter.

RAY KROC
One ticket to Los Angeles.

INT. MCDONALD'S - KITCHEN - EVENING

The dinner rush. Mac and Dick hustle about making sure things
run as smoothly as possible.

ON DICK-- reloading the Lazy Susan with bun tops.

RAY KROC (O.S.)
Do it for your country.

DICK MCDONALD
(turns, surprised)
Ray.

MAC MCDONALD (O.S.)
What are you doing here?

Mac is there, too.

RAY KROC
If you boys don't want to franchise
for yourselves, fine. But do it for
your country. For *America*.
(BEAT)
This place you've created, it's not
a restaurant. It's not even a
place. It's an idea.

ON DICK-- absorbing.

DICK MCDONALD
(to nearby employee)
Tommy, finish the buns.

INT. BACK OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Kroc stands before the brothers.

RAY KROC
That drive back home on 66, I
passed through a lot of towns. A
lot of small towns. In the middle
of each one of them was a Main
Street. And on each of those Main
Streets were always the same two
things: a courthouse and a church.
A courthouse topped with a flag. A
church topped with a cross. Flags
and crosses, crosses and flags.

The brothers look at each other, unsure where this is going.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
As I drove along, I pondered those
crosses and flags. I asked myself
why they're so ubiquitous. What
they *mean*. And as I did, I couldn't
help but think about your
restaurant. About these--

He goes over to the blueprint, plants a finger on the arches.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

Now, forgive me if this flirts with blasphemy, but to my mind, these arches share a great deal in common with the Christian cross and the American flag. A building topped with a cross is a gathering place. A place where decent, wholesome folks can come together and be with others who share their values. The same can be said of a building flanked by a pair of your arches. Those arches mean more than simply "delicious hamburgers inside". They signify family. Community. The ties that bind. They represent goodness, togetherness, a place for Americans to gather and break bread. McDonald's can be that, too. The new American church, feeding bodies and feeding souls. And not just on Sundays. Seven days a week.

(BEAT)

Crosses. Flags. *Arches.*

ON MAC-- blown away. He looks over at Dick, expecting a similar reaction. He's surprised to see a conflicted look on his face.

MAC MCDONALD

(to Kroc)

Would you please give us a minute?

INT. BACK OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

The brothers, alone in the office.

DICK MCDONALD

(tempted, torn)

I don't know...

MAC MCDONALD

It's your *dream*, Dick.

(eye contact)

Bigger than your dream. Arches--
your arches--coast to coast.

Dick's eyes go to the U.S. map. A whole country, just waiting to be filled in with push pins.

DICK MCDONALD

I can't put you through that again.

ON MAC-- looking at Dick gazing longingly at the map.

MAC MCDONALD

I know how bad you want this. You should have it.

DICK MCDONALD

Last time, you very nearly wound up—

MAC MCDONALD

We'll do it different this time. Learn from our mistakes.

DICK MCDONALD

How so?

MAC MCDONALD

We keep a much tighter leash. Total oversight, every change has to go through us.

DICK MCDONALD

Who says he's gonna listen?

MAC MCDONALD

We draw up a contract. Lay it out, clear as day in black and white.

ON DICK-- pondering. Seemingly warming to the idea.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Whaddaya say?

INT. LAW FIRM - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Ray Kroc sits across a table from the brothers and their LAWYER. Kroc is skimming through a BIG FAT CONTRACT. Full of clauses and sections and paragraphs.

ANGLE ON contract. Amidst a wall of legalese:

...ANY AND ALL MODIFICATIONS TO THE SPEEDEE SYSTEM OR ANY MCDONALD FRANCHISE, EITHER PHYSICAL OR CONCEPTUAL, MUST BE FORMALLY SUBMITTED IN WRITING FOR APPROVAL BY BOTH RICHARD MCDONALD AND MAURICE MCDONALD...

RAY KROC (O.S.)

Fine.

Kroc has a rushed air about him, eager to get to the dotted line. He continues skimming. A glimpse of another page:

...KROC SHALL RECEIVE ONE AND NINE-TENTHS PERCENT (1.9%) OF NET PROFITS GENERATED BY FRANCHISEE(S), WITH ONE-HALF OF ONE PERCENT (0.5%) OF SAID NET PROFITS PAID TO RICHARD MCDONALD AND MAURICE MCDONALD...

RAY KROC (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Fine.

SHORT TIME LATER--

Three copies of the contract are laid out before Kroc, open to the last page. The brothers' lawyer slides him a fountain pen. He readily signs in triplicate.

RAY KROC (PRE-LAP)

We are a dynamic, fast-growing company.

INT. MIDWAY SAVINGS & LOAN - DAY (ONE MONTH LATER)

Kroc, dressed in his best suit and tie, sits across from a LOAN OFFICER.

RAY KROC

And now, we're poised to make major inroads nationally.

The loan officer looks at a set of BLUEPRINTS on his desk titled **MCDONALD'S #6 - DES PLAINES, ILL.**

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

In addition to giving us a foothold in the Midwest, the Des Plaines location will serve as a lure for prospective franchisees.

The loan officer looks over the blueprint. Something catches his eye.

LOAN OFFICER

What are those?

Kroc follows his gaze to the arches. He smiles proudly.

RAY KROC

Oh, that's just my little way of separating us from the pack. "The Golden Arches", I call 'em.

The loan officer picks up a bound prospectus prepared by Kroc. Artist renderings, projected earnings, etc.

ON KROC-- anxiously watching as he leafs through it.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
 (filling the air)
 There's nothing like it in the
 entire food-service sector.

The loan officer looks up from the materials.

LOAN OFFICER
 You look familiar. Have we met?

RAY KROC
 (a drop uneasy)
 I don't believe so.

ON LOAN OFFICER, staring, determined to place the face. He snaps his fingers--

LOAN OFFICER
 The Fold-A-Nook!
 (hint of smirk)
 "It's Like A Murphy Bed... For Your
 Kitchen!"

EXT. MIDWAY SAVINGS & LOAN - MOMENTS LATER

Kroc exits the bank in defeat.

INT. ILLINOIS FIRST FEDERAL - LATER

Kroc sits across from another LOAN OFFICER, watching as he looks over the prospectus.

RAY KROC
 There's nothing like it in the
 entire food-service sector.

The officer looks up at Kroc.

LOAN OFFICER #2
 Have we met?

The man searches his face. Kroc squirms.

LOAN OFFICER #2 (CONT'D)
 The paper-cup guy.

ON KROC-- silent a long beat.

RAY KROC
 (embarrassed, broken)
 Among many other things.

The loan officer stares at Kroc, taking in his vulnerable, Willy Loman-esque visage. A wave of compassion/pity comes over him.

LOAN OFFICER #2
 I tell you what. Let me refer you to one of my colleagues. Somebody who may be better suited to meet your needs.

A FEW DESKS DOWN - MOMENTS LATER

Kroc sits before a different LOAN OFFICER. The man is filling out an APPLICATION FORM for Kroc.

LOAN OFFICER
 Address?

RAY KROC
 143 Juniper Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois.

ANGLE ON the form as the man fills in Kroc's address. It's a HOME-MORTGAGE LOAN APPLICATION. A desk plaque tells us this is **HARVEY PELTZ - HOME MORTGAGE REPRESENTATIVE**.

HARVEY PELTZ
 Home telephone number?

RAY KROC
 Let me give you my office number.

Kroc glances at his WEDDING RING.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
 That's the best place to reach me.

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - DAY

ANGLE ON blueprints for the Des Plaines McDonald's covering Kroc's walls.

RAY KROC (O.S.)
 Did you schedule the stakeout with the engineer?

JUNE MARTINO (O.S.)
 All set.

ON KROC-- at his desk, plowing through a lengthy to-do list as June takes notes.

RAY KROC

Where are we at on fire department approval for driveway design?

JUNE MARTINO

Left a message yesterday.

RAY KROC

Call again. Excavation permit?

JUNE MARTINO

Meeting with them today.

RAY KROC

Insurers?

JUNE MARTINO

I left a message yesterday.

RAY KROC

Call again. What about the zoning office?

JUNE MARTINO

All set. On file with the city.

RAY KROC

San Bernardino?

JUNE MARTINO

I just spoke to Dick. He says they're working on it.

RAY KROC

Working on it?

He lets out a heaving, irritated sigh.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

It's been a *week*.

INT. MCDONALD'S (SAN BERNARDINO) - OFFICE - SHORT TIME LATER

Dick is at his desk. An EMPLOYEE sticks his head in.

EMPLOYEE

Ray Kroc, line one.

DICK MCDONALD

Hiya, Ray.

RAY KROC (O.S.)
You boys are killing me.

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

(Intercut as necessary.)

RAY KROC
What's the hold up? I break ground
in two weeks.

DICK MCDONALD
These things take time. You're
proposing substantial alterations.

RAY KROC
I'm adding a basement and furnace.

DICK MCDONALD
We need our architect to thoroughly
review it to make sure everything's
safe and up to code.

RAY KROC
Has he looked at it yet?

DICK MCDONALD
I'm not sure, to be honest.

RAY KROC
I can't afford to let this drag.

DICK MCDONALD
Ray, you need to take a breath. It
hasn't even been a week.

RAY KROC
I've got bulldozers rolling up on
the 23rd.

DICK MCDONALD
I'm not the one who scheduled that.

RAY KROC
Do you have any idea what it'd cost
me to push?

DICK MCDONALD
Hopefully, it won't come to that.

RAY KROC

Every restaurant in the Midwest has a basement and a furnace. This is standard stuff.

DICK MCDONALD

I understand. But you have to understand, it's our name on that building. God forbid the floor caves in and people get hurt or worse because of some design flaw we missed, we're the ones on the hook. So let's just slow down a minute and make sure it's done the right way. Alright?

ON KROC-- pondering Dick's words of reason.

RAY KROC

So much for the Speedee System!

He hangs up.

SHORT TIME LATER--

Mac is in the office with Dick.

MAC MCDONALD

Then what did he say?

DICK MCDONALD

He slammed down the phone.

MAC MCDONALD

He hung up on you?

DICK MCDONALD

Unless we got violently disconnected.

Dick looks off, feeling the first pangs of buyer's remorse.

MAC MCDONALD

It'll be fine.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - ANOTHER DAY

ANGLE ON a sign: **COMING SOON - MCDONALD'S FAMOUS HAMBURGERS!**

A hard-hatted Kroc stands in a dirt lot, watching SURVEYORS outline a building foundation. He heads over to one of the surveyors, pointing to some detail--

RAY KROC
Can we bring that out another foot?

JUNE MARTINO (O.S.)
Sir?

June comes over to Kroc with a letter. He looks at it, sees the San Bernardino return address.

RAY KROC
Read it.

She opens the letter, reads aloud--

JUNE MARTINO
"Dear Ray, Thank you for your letter sharing your idea to strike a deal with Coca-Cola to sponsor menu boards at the new Des Plaines location. An intriguing notion, indeed. As you rightly point out, such an arrangement would provide a steady source of revenue to the store at no additional labor cost.

ON KROC-- pleased with the letter so far.

JUNE MARTINO (CONT'D)
"However...

INT. PAY PHONE - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc is on a pay phone across the street from the construction site.

RAY KROC
Small, along the bottom. Very discrete.

INT. MCDONALD'S - SAN BERNARDINO - CONTINUOUS

On the other end is Mac in the kitchen, his brother nearby. (Intercut as necessary.)

DICK MCDONALD
I'm sorry, Ray, but we're just not comfortable with the notion of turning our menu into an advertisement.

RAY KROC
Not an ad. Sponsorship.

DICK MCDONALD
It's distasteful.

RAY KROC
It's free money.

DICK MCDONALD
There are plenty of things we could do to make a quick buck, but that doesn't mean we should.

RAY KROC
Loads of restaurants do it.

DICK MCDONALD
Well, we don't.

RAY KROC
Why not?

DICK MCDONALD
Because I have no interest in indulging in that sort of crass commercialism. It's not McDonald's.

RAY KROC
I didn't realize I was partnering up with a beatnik.

DICK MCDONALD
I happen to be a card-carrying Republican.

RAY KROC
You coulda fooled me!

He slams down the phone. Again.

SHORT TIME LATER--

Mac and Dick, post-call.

MAC MCDONALD
He's just a little... excitable.

DICK MCDONALD
A hothead like that, you don't know what he's capable of.

MAC MCDONALD
It's all bluster, Dick. His bark is worse than his bite.

DICK MCDONALD
 (dark chuckle)
 That's what Neville Chamberlain
 said.

INT. MCDONALD'S (DES PLAINES) - DAY (MONTHS LATER)

The brand-new Des Plaines McDonald's, up and running.

TRACKING SHOT, high-energy, as Kroc moves through the KITCHEN barking out orders to his charges. It's a bit militaristic in vibe, echoing Dick's Hitler reference:

"Watch those fries!"... "Straighten that hat!"... "Buns to the left, pickles to the right!"... "Let's go, boys!"

He passes an EMPLOYEE, catching him in a moment of repose--

RAY KROC
 Grab a mop! If there's time to
 lean, there's time to clean!

Tracking shot ends at the GRILL, manned by a trio of GRILLERS overseeing dozens of patties. Kroc moves down the line:

GRILLER #1, flipping a patty--

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
 More wrist!

Kroc grabs the spatula, demonstrates proper form. He moves onto GRILLER #2, who's lifting a patty off the grill--

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
 It's still pink!

Kroc puts the patty back onto the grill. He moves on to GRILLER #3--

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
 What the heck are you--

Kroc trails off, realizing Griller #3 is doing NOTHING WRONG.

His patties are perfect, arranged in rows so precise they could have been lined up with a ruler.

ON KROC-- taking in the eager young buck, who looks maybe 21.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
 What's your name?

GRILLER #3
Fred Turner, sir.

RAY KROC
Fred Turner...
(small, approving nod)
Keep it up.

FRED TURNER
Yes, sir.

Kroc walks off. Turner is thrilled by the approval.

EXT. MCDONALD'S - NIGHT (AFTER HOURS)

Under the glow of the arches, Kroc scours the parking lot, fanatically cleaning. Picking up discarded cups, scraping gum off the underside of benches.

INT. KROC'S HOUSE - LATER

Ethel is asleep in bed. Kroc enters, home from another long day of work. He starts getting undressed.

As he unbuttons his shirt, he hears a sound. A tiny sniffle. Ethel is awake, crying softly.

He goes over, sits on the bed next to her.

RAY KROC
I'm sorry.

ON KROC-- taking in her sad, lonely face.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
I know I've neglected you.

He looks her in the eye.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Tomorrow night. Let's have supper at the club.

ETHEL KROC
(surprised, heartened)
Really?

RAY KROC
It's been far too long.

He hands her a tissue. She blows her nose.

INT. ROLLING GREEN COUNTRY CLUB - DINING ROOM - NEXT NIGHT

The dining room of a not especially upscale country club. Kroc leads Ethel to a big round table. At it are fellow CLUB MEMBERS, who warmly greet them.

JERRY CULLEN

By George, I think I've seen a ghost!

SHORT TIME LATER--

The middle of the meal. Ray kibitzes with the men, Ethel engaged in a cross-conversation with the wives.

ON ETHEL AND THE WOMEN--

CLUB WIFE #1

I hear Acapulco is divine.

CLUB WIFE #2

Mildred Ballard was just there. She adored it.

Ethel nods along, not wanting to stick out.

CLUB WIFE #2 (CONT'D)

Where do you like, Ethel?

ETHEL KROC

Me?

(BEAT, scrambling)
Spain.

CLUB WIFE #3

Wonderful! How was it?

ETHEL KROC

(backtracks)

I mean, we're thinking about it.
Planning to, in the fall.

Nods and smiles from the other women. The conversation moves on, bullet dodged.

BACK TO KROC AND THE MEN--

JERRY CULLEN

That's the last time I try a sand wedge in that bunker!

Hearty laughs from the others, loving the golf humor.

JACK HORFORD
How's your game, Ray?

RAY KROC
Lately? Non-existent.

The men laugh, missing the literalness of the statement.

JACK HORFORD
I'm no Ben Hogan myself.

ON KROC-- seeing an opening in the conversation.

RAY KROC
(cryptic smile)
But I did recently hit a hole-in-one of a different sort.

The men glance at each other, intrigued.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Anyone interested in hearing about an exciting investment opportunity?

Kroc sneaks a glance at Ethel. She's staring at him, crestfallen. So this is why we're at the club.

JACK HORFORD (O.S.)
(chuckle)
Here we go again...

ON HORFORD-- smiling at Kroc, a bit condescendingly.

JACK HORFORD (CONT'D)
What is it this time, Ray?

ON ETHEL-- taking in the way Horford looks at her husband. It irks her.

ETHEL KROC
Hear him out.

Ethel looks at Ray, looks back at Horford.

ETHEL KROC (CONT'D)
This is different.

ON KROC-- surprised and touched she has his back. He grabs her hand under the table, looks her reassuringly in the eye.

Yes, it is. It is different this time.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

--Jerry Cullen signing franchise papers as Kroc looks on.

--Kroc and Jack Horford, in hardhats, presiding as ground is broken at a CONSTRUCTION SITE. Behind them is a sign with McDonald's mascot Speedee, who says, "**HOWDY, SCHAUMBURG! McDONALD'S IS ON THE WAY!**"

--Kroc and Ethel having dinner again at Rolling Green CC, Kroc working the menfolk, trolling for franchisees.

--Kroc playing a round of golf at the club, giving his golf mates the sales spiel.

--Kroc looking on as one of the golf guys signs a contract.

EXT. MCDONALD'S (SCHAUMBURG) - DAY

Kroc pulls into the parking lot of Jack Horford's brand-new Schaumburg McDonald's. There's a line out front, not spectacular but solid.

He parks, heads toward the restaurant. He slows, noticing something.

KROC'S POV: A patron in his car, biting into a hamburger. Sticking out the sides of the burger is a PIECE OF LETTUCE.

ON KROC-- staring at the lettuce, disturbed by the sight.

EXT. ROLLING GREEN C.C. - GOLF COURSE - SHORT TIME LATER

Jack Horford, part of a foursome, is about to tee off.

GOLF BUDDY

Give it a whack, Jack.

Horford rears back to swing when, out the corner of his eye, he sees--

KROC, storming onto the course, marching toward him.

As Kroc gets closer, Horford sees he's holding something... a HAMBURGER. Kroc gets right up in his face with it.

RAY KROC

What is this?

Horford stares at the burger.

JACK HORFORD
It appears to be a hamburger.

RAY KROC
It's not a McDonald's hamburger.

He lifts off the bun, pointing out its myriad deficiencies--

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Too much ketchup. Three pickles not two. Lettuce. *Lettuce*, Jack?

JACK HORFORD
Do you think we could discuss this later? We're in the middle of--

RAY KROC
And the patty.
(breaks it open)
Tragically overcooked.

JERRY CULLEN (O.S.)
I don't know, Ray...

Fellow franchise owner Jerry Cullen (part of the foursome) leans in, checking out the burger.

JERRY CULLEN (CONT'D)
Looks good to me.

RAY KROC
(glares at Cullen)
What the heck would you know about quality?

ON CULLEN-- thrown.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
I dropped in on your store today. I must say, I was quite disturbed.

JERRY CULLEN
What by?

RAY KROC
For starters, the menu... Corn on the cob?

JERRY CULLEN
What's wrong with corn on the cob?

RAY KROC
Fried chicken?

JERRY CULLEN
People love fried chicken.

RAY KROC
Then they can go to a restaurant
that serves it!

Cullen and Horford trade glances, bewildered.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
And the filth. The kitchen looked
like some sort of Manchurian slum.

JERRY CULLEN
(smirk)
With great chicken.

Everybody laughs. Kroc is not amused.

RAY KROC
(to both of them)
Are you aware of what goes on at
your restaurants? Do you even care?

JERRY CULLEN
Look, Ray, I don't know about you,
but I'm retired.

JACK HORFORD
You said this'd be a good place to
park our money. It's an investment,
nothing more.

JERRY CULLEN
If I wanted a job, I'da applied for
a cook position.

ON KROC-- silently stewing.

INT. KROC'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ethel is getting dressed, putting on jewelry and makeup. Ray enters, home from work.

ETHEL KROC
Hurry up and get changed. Dinner's
called for seven.

RAY KROC
We're not going to the club
tonight.

ETHEL KROC
You cancelled our dinner plans?

RAY KROC
I cancelled our membership.

ETHEL KROC
What?

RAY KROC
Those Rolling Green people aren't
our kind.

ETHEL KROC
What are you talking about?

RAY KROC
I've lost interest in hobnobbing
with the idle rich.

ETHEL KROC
Idle rich?

RAY KROC
With their golf and their Rob Roys.

ETHEL KROC
Please tell me this is a joke.

RAY KROC
Contented. Complacent.

ETHEL KROC
Those are my friends, Ray. My
entire social life!

RAY KROC
We'll find new friends.

Ethel throws herself onto the bed, bursting into tears.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Far more suitable.

EXT. MCDONALD'S (SCHAUMBURG) - DAY

Kroc sits in his car across the street from Jack Horford's
McDonald's, anonymously watching--

KROC'S POV: A crowd of ANNOYED CUSTOMERS waiting for their
food. A customer checks his watch.

CUSTOMER
 (to cashier)
 How much longer?

Kroc watches the shabbily run operation, sickened. He takes a swig from his flask.

The pre-lap sound of VOMITING carries over to--

INT. PRINCE CASTLE SALES - MEN'S ROOM - DAY

Kroc bent over the toilet, puking his guts out.

INT. OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Kroc exits the bathroom, walks toward the FRONT DESK carrying the men's room key.

SALESMAN (O.S.)
 Just take a gander at this handsome
 gold inlay.

Kroc comes to the desk, where he sees a BIBLE SALESMAN (23) talking to June, briefcase full of samples popped open.

SALESMAN (CONT'D)
 You're telling me such spectacular
 craftsmanship isn't worth \$8.95?

JUNE MARTINO
 Thank you, I'm not interested.

SALESMAN
 Not interested in a Bible sure to
 be the pride of your home library?

ON KROC-- observing the young salesman.

SALESMAN (CONT'D)
 As you no doubt know, June, envy is
 one of the seven deadly sins. And
 that's just what your friends and
 neighbors will be guilty of when
 they see this leather-bound beauty
 on your bookshelf.

JUNE MARTINO
 Sir, this is a private place of
 business. I'm afraid I'm going to
 have to ask you to leave.

BEAT. The salesman gathers up his things, heads out of the office. June's telephone rings.

JUNE MARTINO (CONT'D)
 Prince Castle Sales.
 (BEAT, listening)
 Oh, hello, Mac.

Kroc hears the name. A knot instantly forms in his stomach.

JUNE MARTINO (CONT'D)
 One moment, I'll see if he's in.

She covers the phone, turns to Kroc.

JUNE MARTINO (CONT'D)
 It's Mac... just wants to know how
 it's going.

ON KROC-- frozen, staring at the phone.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The salesman heading down the hall toward the elevator.

RAY KROC (O.S.)
 Wait!

The salesman slows, turns. Standing there is Kroc, looking him over, sizing him up.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
 What's your name?

SALESMAN
 Leonard. Leonard Rosenblatt.

RAY KROC
 Rosenblatt.

ON KROC-- digesting the name, intrigued.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
 What's a Jew doing selling Catholic
 Bibles?

LEONARD ROSENBLATT
 (unapologetic)
 Making a living.

ON KROC-- taking in the hungry young go-getter. It's not hard to read his mind. *This is just the sort of fella I need.*

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - DAY

Rosenblatt and his wife MYRA (22) sit across from Kroc. Kroc slides a pen and contract to them.

ON LEONARD AND MYRA ROSENBLATT-- looking at each other. Excited, hopeful. A young couple, staking everything on a shared dream. Myra gives his hand a squeeze.

MYRA ROSENBLATT

I believe in you.

LEONARD ROSENBLATT

Us, Myra.

ON KROC-- watching the interaction with admiration--and a touch of jealousy.

EXT. MCDONALD'S (THE ROSENBLATTS') - DAY (A FEW MONTHS LATER)

The Rosenblatts' new McDonald's in Waukegan, IL. Festive bunting lines the front, a banner proclaiming **GRAND OPENING TODAY!** A line of the curious and hungry forms outside.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The hustle and bustle of a smooth-running kitchen. It's a model of cleanliness and professionalism, everything the country clubbers' locations were not.

ON KROC-- in the middle of it all, observing, highly pleased.

LEONARD ROSENBLATT (O.S.)

Let's go, chop-chop!

ON ROSENBLATT-- moving around the kitchen, barking out orders, making sure everything's just so.

MYRA ROSENBLATT (O.S.)

Here y'go, champ!

Kroc looks toward the front of the store, where he sees...

Myra, handing out lollipops to children. She's wearing a red apron that says **MCDONALD'S**--and a big smile on her face.

Kroc goes over. She hands him a lollipop.

MYRA ROSENBLATT (CONT'D)

It's normally ten and under, but for you I'll make an exception.

Kroc looks at the lollipop. Tied to it is a ribbon with the store's address on it. He couldn't be more impressed.

RAY KROC (PRE-LAP)
You shoulda seen 'em.

INT. KROC'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - THAT NIGHT

Kroc is getting undressed for bed, buzzing.

RAY KROC
You've never seen a pair of dynamos
like these two.

ON ETHEL-- in bed, half-listening, about to fall asleep.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
He's in back, running the kitchen,
she's up front, passing out suckers
to the kiddies. Like a real team.
(BEAT)
It's wonderful. Don't you think?

No reply from the sleepy Ethel. He gives her a poke.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Don't you?

ETHEL KROC
Don't I what?

RAY KROC
Think it's wonderful.
(angling)
Two people, side by side, working
together...

ETHEL KROC
Are you trying to hire me, Ray?

RAY KROC
You say you never see me anymore.
This is a perfect way.

ETHEL KROC
I don't want to work for you.

RAY KROC
With me. Husband and wife, united
in labor and in life. You know?

ETHEL KROC
I mean...

ON ETHEL-- pondering, really struggling with the notion.

ETHEL KROC (CONT'D)
Not really.

A stretch of tense, edgy silence.

RAY KROC
I made us supper plans for Friday.

ETHEL KROC
I don't suppose you rejoined
Rolling Green.

RAY KROC
No.
(gazes off)
Someplace far better.

INT. VFW HALL - EVENING

ANGLE ON a big banner across a wood-paneled wall: **VFW POST
482 - FRIDAY NIGHT POTLUCK DINNER & BINGO**

PAN DOWN to a long table lined with couples. Blue-collar types, several rungs down the social ladder from Rolling Green. And younger, average age closer to 30 than 60.

In the midst of them, we find Ray and Ethel. They're dressed deliberately "blue collar", matching the people around them.

ON ETHEL-- edgily pushing her meatloaf and mashed potatoes around her plate.

RAY KROC (O.S.)
So, Art, what do you do for a
living?

Kroc is chatting up the COUPLE (mid-20s) next to them.

ART WOLODARSKY
Well, I had a little plumbing
business going for a while after
getting out of the service. Now I
sell vacuum cleaners. And give
piano lessons on the side.

RAY KROC
Golly. Plumbing, pianos, you're a
regular jack of all trades.

ART WOLODARSKY
Whatever puts food on the table.

Art's WIFE smiles proudly at her hard-working man.

ON KROC-- sizing them up. They fit the profile to a T.

RAY KROC

How would you like to do more than
merely "put food on the table"?

CUT TO:

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - SHORT TIME LATER

Art Wolodarsky signing up for a franchise, his faithful wife
by his side. This leads to--

RECRUITMENT MONTAGE:

Kroc hunting for new recruits for the McDonald's Army. Quick
cuts of Kroc making the SAME SPEECH in various places.
Shriners halls, synagogues, Amway meetings:

RAY KROC

I'm looking for a few good men!
Hustlers! Scrappers! Grinders! Men
willing to roll up their sleeves,
men with fire in their bellies!

(BEAT)

I stand before you today offering
something more precious than gold:
opportunity. Opportunity to
advance. To succeed. To get your
shot at the brass ring, the
American Dream. For McDonald's,
like this great nation itself, is a
true meritocracy. If you're willing
to put in the work, if you've got
the gumption and the guts and the
desire, the sky's the limit at
McDonald's. Put in the necessary
elbow grease and, by gum, I promise
you there's a pot of gold waiting
for you at the end of those Golden
Arches. So who's with me? Who's
ready to strap it on and step onto
that first rung of the ladder of
success? Who's ready to make that
glorious upward climb, ascending
into the hard-won heavens of
success and prosperity?

Shots of Kroc gaining traction, getting on a roll:

--YOUNG COUPLES cashing out bank accounts.

--Kroc cutting the ribbon at store openings. Lines down the block. Cash registers ringing.

--Kroc biting into a burger served by the owner-operator of a new franchise. Art Wolodarsky.

--Kroc driving back to his own store in Des Plaines, sweeping the lot after dark. Relentless. Inexhaustible. Obsessed.

END OF MONTAGE.

INT. EASTERN AIRLINES - DAY

A flight in mid-air. Kroc, in a window seat, gazes out at the flat, snow-dusted expanse below. Next to him is Fred Turner, head buried in a McDonald's operations manual.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT (O.S.)
Ladies and gentlemen, we are about
to begin our initial descent into
Minneapolis-St. Paul.

EXT. MCDONALD'S - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc and Turner pull up to a brand-new McDonald's in a taxi. Stretched across the front is a banner: **MINNESOTA IS MCDONALD'S COUNTRY!** They step out of the cab.

JIM ZIEN (O.S.)
Welcome!

JIM ZIEN, the store's burly, gregarious owner, comes out to greet them. With a showman's flourish, he gestures to a pair of HIGH-SCHOOL CHEERLEADERS in McDonald's red and white.

JIM ZIEN (CONT'D)
Gimme an M!

CHEERLEADERS
M!

JIM ZIEN
Gimme a C!

CHEERLEADERS
C!

ON KROC-- beaming, eating up the red-carpet reception.

JIM ZIEN (O.S.)
Gimme a D!

CHEERLEADERS (O.S.)
D!

INT. ROLLIE'S STEAKHOUSE - LATER/EVENING

Kroc, Turner and Zien at a Minneapolis steakhouse. The WAITER is taking their orders.

RAY KROC
Ribeye. Bloody.
(hands waiter menu,
smiles)
I want the cow still mooing.

Everybody chuckles. Kroc is really feeling his oats.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
And a couple sides of creamed
spinach for the table.

SHORT TIME LATER--

Kroc is tucking into his enormous, bloody steak.

JIM ZIEN
How is it?

RAY KROC
You couldn't top this in Chicago.

JIM ZIEN
We don't mess around up here.

RAY KROC
My compliments to the chef.

JIM ZIEN
I'll do you one better. How about
the owner?

With this, Zien waves at someone across the room. A MAN comes over, gives Zien a chummy back-pat.

MAN
Jimmy! Good to see ya!

We get the distinct sense this was pre-arranged.

MAN (CONT'D)
Everything alright tonight?

JIM ZIEN
Wonderful as always, Rollie.

Zien gestures toward his VIP guest--

JIM ZIEN (CONT'D)
Rollie Smith, Ray Kroc.

This is ROLLIE SMITH, the owner. He enthusiastically shakes Kroc's hand.

ROLLIE SMITH
A pleasure.

RAY KROC
You've got one helluva restaurant here.

ROLLIE SMITH
Coming from you, that's quite a compliment.

RAY KROC
(pleased)
I see my reputation precedes me.

ROLLIE SMITH
I'm a great admirer.

Kroc gestures to an empty chair, eager for more flattery.

ROLLIE SMITH (CONT'D)
(fake-demurring)
I don't want to interrupt.

RAY KROC
Please.

ROLLIE SMITH
Maybe just a minute.

ONE HOUR LATER--

A BUSBOY is clearing plates. Smith is still at the table.

ROLLIE SMITH (CONT'D)
Well, you've certainly found a warm and loving home here in Minneapolis.

RAY KROC
So it seems.

ROLLIE SMITH
This town just can't get enough of
McDonald's.

Smith raises Kroc's empty glass to a passing WAITER.

ROLLIE SMITH (CONT'D)
Another Canadian Club for my
friend.

The waiter nods, heads off with the glass.

ROLLIE SMITH (CONT'D)
(resuming--)
In fact, I'd say there's sufficient
enthusiasm to support another.

RAY KROC
A second location?

ROLLIE SMITH
And come to think of it, I can
think of the perfect person to own
and operate.

RAY KROC
(gamely playing along)
You don't say.

ROLLIE SMITH
Somebody who knows what it takes to
build a great restaurant. Someone
with more than 25 years experience
in the food-service industry.

RAY KROC
Who?

ROLLIE SMITH
Me!

RAY KROC
Oh!

ON KROC-- deeply enjoying this. For a man who's spent his
life groveling, sucking up to people, trying to curry favor,
to be on the receiving end is a thrilling new experience.

ROLLIE SMITH
I've got the know-how. I've got the
backers. And I've got the location.

A PIANO is heard in the background. Light, lovely tinkling.

ROLLIE SMITH (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Are you familiar with Hennepin
Avenue?

ON KROC-- distracted, looking toward the piano.

ROLLIE SMITH (CONT'D)
It's one of the busiest commercial
arteries in the whole Twin Cities.
There's a prime site that recently
became available, a full acre on
the corner of Hennepin and...
(sees Kroc not listening)
Mr. Kroc?

Kroc is staring off, transfixed. Smith follows his gaze to--

An ATTRACTIVE BLONDE, early 30s, playing a BABY GRAND PIANO
in the corner. Smith watches Kroc watch her, clearly smitten.

ROLLIE SMITH (CONT'D)
Would you like to meet her?

This gets Kroc's attention.

MOMENTS LATER--

Smith is at the piano, leaning in to the woman's ear, saying
something. She gets up, goes over to the table with him.

ROLLIE SMITH
Ray Kroc, meet Joan Smith.
(BEAT)
My wife.

SHORT TIME LATER--

Joan is sitting next to Kroc, hanging on his every word.

RAY KROC
...Milwaukee, Kenosha, Grand Rapids
and the three Chicago area.

JOAN SMITH
Goodness.

RAY KROC
Oh, and Dayton, Ohio.

JOAN SMITH
All in the last 12 months?

RAY KROC
Nine.

JOAN SMITH
Nine? You must be positively dizzy,
Mr. Kroc!

RAY KROC
Please. Call me Ray.

JOAN SMITH
(eye contact, purr)
Ray...

Kroc blushes, defenseless against the ego-stroking of a pretty blonde.

ROLLIE SMITH
That's some growth.

JOAN SMITH
When did you start it?

RAY KROC
(caught off guard)
Hm?

JOAN SMITH
What year, did you start
McDonald's?

BEAT. Kroc looks at Joan looking at him. So beautiful. So impressed.

RAY KROC
1954.

A BEAT as the lie settles. She smiles.

JOAN SMITH
Remarkable.

Kroc smiles back. She's got him wrapped around her finger.

JOAN SMITH (CONT'D)
I should probably get back.

RAY KROC
To where?

JOAN SMITH
The piano.

RAY KROC
Of course.

He nods, privately disappointed.

JOAN SMITH
What's your favorite song?
(BEAT)
All-time favorite.

He thinks for a BEAT.

RAY KROC
"Pennies From Heaven".

Joan gets up, heads over to the piano. She starts to play.
Ray immediately recognizes the melody.

JOAN SMITH
*Every time it rains, it rains/
Pennies from heaven...*

ON KROC-- charmed, immensely turned on.

JOAN SMITH (CONT'D)
*Don't you know each cloud contains/
Pennies from heaven?*

Kroc gets up, heads to the piano. Takes a seat on the bench
next to her. Removing her hands from the keys, he starts to
PLAY THE SONG. And sing.

RAY KROC
*You'll find your fortune fallin'
all over town/ Be sure that your
umbrella is upside down...*

ON JOAN-- surprised and amazed. He leans in, sotto voce:

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Worked as an organ salesman for a
few years.

She smiles, charmed. Possibly genuine.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
*Trade them for a package of
sunshine and flowers...*
(to Joan)
Join in.

She does--

RAY KROC AND JOAN SMITH
*If you want the things you love,
 you must have showers...*

ON THE ROOM-- eating up the surprise duet. Including Rollie.

RAY KROC AND JOAN SMITH (CONT'D)
*So when you hear it thunder, don't
 run under a tree/ There'll be
 pennies from heaven for you and me*

BIG APPLAUSE. Kroc stands up and takes a bow, basking in it. Joan stands up, clapping too.

JOAN SMITH
 Bravo, Ray!

INT. AIRPLANE - DAY (THE FLIGHT HOME)

Kroc gazes out the window in a state of dreamy reverie. It's not hard to tell what (or who) he's thinking about.

INT. KROC'S HOUSE - DAY

Kroc enters the house. Ethel is in a living-room chair reading a Barbara Cartland romance novel.

ETHEL KROC
 How was the trip?

RAY KROC
 You want to know?

ETHEL KROC
 I'm asking.

RAY KROC
 It was... *triumphant*.

(BEAT)
 They rolled out the red carpet for me. I was welcomed like a king. Wherever I went, I was showered with adulation. Admiration. Respect. People were kneeling before me, kissing my ring, practically begging for a McDonald's.

A BEAT as Ethel absorbs.

ETHEL KROC
That's nice.

RAY KROC
It was.

ETHEL KROC
I'm sure.

She nods to herself, hard to read.

ETHEL KROC (CONT'D)
Pope Raymond The First.

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - DAY

Kroc stands before a U.S. MAP on the wall. There are a dozen or so PUSH PINS stuck in it, mostly clustered around Chicago and the upper Midwest.

ON KROC-- surveying the map with the bearing of a general, hands clasped behind his back.

JUNE MARTINO (O.S.)
Sir?

June is standing by the door.

JUNE MARTINO (CONT'D)
We have a small problem.

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - DAY

Kroc at his desk with June. Spread out before them is the company's FINANCIAL LEDGER, open to a page.

RAY KROC
How could we be almost out of capital?

JUNE MARTINO
Well...

She runs her finger down a column of figures.

RAY KROC
What's that?

JUNE MARTINO
Your revenue. The monthly cut of the stores.

RAY KROC
That's it?

JUNE MARTINO
1.4 percent of net.

RAY KROC
1.4?

JUNE MARTINO
1.9, minus Dick and Mac's half
percent.

She seems way more familiar with the terms than he does.

SHORT TIME LATER--

Kroc is looking at his contract. A passage we glimpsed earlier, at the signing:

...SHALL RECEIVE ONE AND NINE-TENTHS PERCENT (1.9%) OF NET PROFITS GENERATED BY FRANCHISEE(S), WITH ONE-HALF OF ONE PERCENT (0.5%) OF SAID NET PROFITS PAID TO RICHARD MCDONALD AND MAURICE MCDONALD...

Kroc shakes his head, not happy.

EXT. MCDONALD'S (SAN BERNARDINO) - SHORT TIME LATER

Dick is accepting a large shipment of cups and plastic ware. He signs, hands the clipboard back to the DELIVERY MAN.

EMPLOYEE (O.S.)
Mr. McDonald?

Dick turns, sees a YOUNG EMPLOYEE.

EMPLOYEE (CONT'D)
Ray Kroc on the line.

INT. BACK OFFICE - SHORT TIME LATER

Mac stands behind Dick, who picks up the phone, both of them bracing for it.

DICK MCDONALD
Hiya, Ray.

RAY KROC (O.S.)
I want to renegotiate.

DICK MCDONALD
Renegotiate what?

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Kroc paces, contract in hand. (Intercut as necessary.)

RAY KROC
My deal. My lousy deal.

Dick looks totally taken aback.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
1.4 is barely enough to cover my
monthly nut, much less drive
expansion.

DICK MCDONALD
Ray, those are the terms.

RAY KROC
It's not enough.

DICK MCDONALD
It's more than triple our cut.

RAY KROC
Then you oughta be getting more,
too.

DICK MCDONALD
I'm not a greedy man.

RAY KROC
It's not about greed, it's about
taking care of ourselves so we can
take care of this company. If I had
more money to work with, we could
be growing at twice the pace.

DICK MCDONALD
I have no beef with the current
rate of expansion.

RAY KROC
We haven't got a single location in
New York. Pennsylvania.

DICK MCDONALD
All in good time.

RAY KROC
Texas!

DICK MCDONALD
I have no doubt it'll come.

RAY KROC
I've been busting my hump for you boys.

DICK MCDONALD
And you're doing a bang-up job.

RAY KROC
Then I ought to be doing better than just breaking even.

DICK MCDONALD
I don't know what to say.

RAY KROC
Say you'll renegotiate.

DICK MCDONALD
I can't.

RAY KROC
Can't or won't?

DICK MCDONALD
Upping your cut, it wouldn't be fair to the franchisees.

RAY KROC
The franchisees are doing just fine. I'm the one drowning. Between your molasses approval process and the meager cut...

DICK MCDONALD
You freely and willingly agreed to the terms of your deal, Ray. Nobody put a gun to your head.

RAY KROC
Four percent.

DICK MCDONALD
No.

RAY KROC
Three and a half.

DICK MCDONALD
Ray...

RAY KROC
What?

DICK MCDONALD
No.

RAY KROC
GODDAMMIT!

He hangs up.

KITCHEN - SHORT TIME LATER

Post-call. Dick is gazing off stormily.

MAC MCDONALD
Is he a pain in the rear? Yes. Has he got a few screws loose? Maybe. But that doesn't mean he's going to do us any harm.

DICK MCDONALD
How long are you going to keep this up, Mac?

MAC MCDONALD
Keep what up?

DICK MCDONALD
The whole "everything is fine" act.
(eye contact)
There's a wolf in the henhouse! And we let him in!

ON MAC-- looking nauseous. Guilty.

DICK MCDONALD (CONT'D)
I never should have listened.

MAC MCDONALD
We have a contract, Dick. For just this sort of thing.

DICK MCDONALD
I should have trusted my gut.

MAC MCDONALD
He's powerless.

BEAT. Dick shakes his head grimly.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, Dick.

Dick is silent, furious at his brother. At himself.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
I just wanted you to have your...

He trails off, seemingly losing his train of thought.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
I just wanted...

His face grows flushed. Dick sees something is off.

DICK MCDONALD
Mac.

MAC MCDONALD
I'm sorry, Dickie...

ON DICK-- recognizing what this is.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
I didn't mean to leave the gate
open...

DICK MCDONALD
Take a seat.

MAC MCDONALD
I didn't mean to let Boomer get
out...

DICK MCDONALD
(moving toward brother)
Mac, you're having one of your--

CRASH. Mac flops over, crashing to the floor.

SAN BERNARDINO - KITCHEN - SHORT TIME LATER

Mac is sitting on the floor nursing a milkshake. Next to him
is a tin box marked **GLUCAGON EMERGENCY KIT**.

DICK MCDONALD
A few more sips.

Mac takes a sip of the shake. His sleeves are rolled up,
revealing a MEDIC ALERT BRACELET. Engraved on it is **DIABETES
TYPE 1**.

MAC MCDONALD
I'm okay.

ON DICK-- looking at his brother with love and worry.

ON MAC-- gazing off at something...

The Multimixer on the counter. Kroc's machine, used to make the shake in his hands.

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - DAY

Kroc sits at his desk. Next to a bottle of Canadian Club is a pile of BILLS AND INVOICES. He picks one up. It's from ILLINOIS FIRST FEDERAL, stamped **PAST DUE**. He picks up another one. From CHICAGO GAS & ELECTRIC. He stares at the amount owed.

RAY KROC (PRE-LAP)
Ninety-four dollars?

INT. MCDONALD'S (DES PLAINES) - COOLER - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc in the walk-in cooler with Fred Turner. In Kroc's hand is the Chicago Gas & Electric bill.

FRED TURNER
It's unbelievable what these suckers cost to run.

Kroc shakes his head, a knot in his stomach.

FRED TURNER (CONT'D)
My pop used to own an ice-cream parlor. He went belly-up from the refrigeration costs.

Kroc's eye drifts to the left side of the cooler. The entire side is filled with drums of ice cream (for the milkshakes).

ON KROC-- staring at the drums.

INT. KROC'S HOUSE - ENTRANCE/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Kroc enters the house. He hangs up his coat and makes a beeline for the liquor cabinet, pours himself a stiff drink.

ETHEL KROC (O.S.)
A man called today.

Kroc turns, startled to see Ethel in a recliner in a corner of the darkened room.

RAY KROC
Ethel.

ETHEL KROC
From a bank.

RAY KROC
Alright...

ETHEL KROC
Illinois First Federal.

RAY KROC
What did they want?

ETHEL KROC
You don't know?

RAY KROC
Why would I?

She gives him an unnerving stare.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
What?

ETHEL KROC
Ray...
(eye contact)
Did you mortgage our home?

ON KROC-- a deer in the headlights.

INT. ILLINOIS FIRST FEDERAL - DAY

Kroc marches through the bank to Harvey Peltz's desk.

RAY KROC
I specifically said the office is
the best place to reach me!

ON PELTZ-- taken aback by the intrusion.

HARVEY PELTZ
I tried you there, Mr. Kroc.
Numerous times.

RAY KROC
You have no right to call me at my
home. It is a blatant invasion of
privacy.

HARVEY PELTZ

With all due respect, sir, when you're three months behind on your payments, you don't get to pick and choose where you're contacted.

INT. KROC'S CAR - DAY

Kroc driving along a highway. A sign appears ahead:

MINNEAPOLIS - 377 MILES

EXT. MCDONALD'S (ROLLIE SMITH) - NIGHT

Kroc approaches a gleaming new McDonald's in downtown Minneapolis. He looks through a window, into the store.

ON KROC-- gazing.

KROC'S POV: Joan Smith in a McDonald's apron, looking just adorable. Pretty much his fantasy image of a woman.

Out the corner of her eye, she sees Kroc through the glass. She heads out to him.

JOAN SMITH

Ray?

RAY KROC

(jokey)

Surprise inspection!

JOAN SMITH

What are you doing here?

RAY KROC

Just thought I'd fly up, see how things are going.

She smiles, impressed. It makes him feel great.

INT. ROLLIE'S STEAKHOUSE - LATER

Kroc having dinner with Rollie and Joan.

ROLLIE SMITH

\$12,400.

RAY KROC

That's some haul for month one.

ROLLIE SMITH
And once we clear start-up costs...

RAY KROC
You'll be looking at a tidy little profit.

Rollie and Joan nod, buzzing over the prospect.

ROLLIE SMITH
Speaking of which: I hate to mix business with pleasure...

RAY KROC
(wry)
I don't.

Everyone chuckles. Rollie proceeds.

ROLLIE SMITH
My expenses...

RAY KROC
What about 'em?

ROLLIE SMITH
Well, they're a bit higher than anticipated. One in particular... That dang walk-in.

ON KROC-- interested to hear more.

ROLLIE SMITH (CONT'D)
The bill's a real whopper.

RAY KROC
All that ice cream.

ROLLIE SMITH
Exactly.

RAY KROC
It's a real problem.

A BUSBOY comes by, clears their finished plates.

ROLLIE SMITH
Now, I don't want to overstep my bounds here, but I think I may have found a solution.
(looks at Joan, proud)
Joan did, actually.

RAY KROC
You don't say.

Kroc turns to Joan, all ears.

JOAN SMITH
(salesman-like)
What if I told you there was a way
to save you, us, and all your owner-
operators literally hundreds of
dollars a year in electrical costs?

Kroc cocks an intrigued eyebrow.

JOAN SMITH (CONT'D)
And free up valuable storage space.
And reduce the amount of time it
takes to make a milkshake by half.

RAY KROC
I'll bite.

She reaches under the table, pulls out her purse. She takes
out a copy of **RESTAURANT BUSINESS MONTHLY**, slides it to Kroc.

JOAN SMITH
Page 22.

Kroc opens the trade publication to page 22. A FULL-PAGE AD
for something called INST-A-MIX. The ad copy trumpets:

**ATTENTION RESTAURANT OPERATORS! INTRODUCING INST-A-MIX, THE
MIRACULOUS INSTANT ICE-CREAM SUBSTITUTE THAT WILL SAVE YOU
'SCOOPFULS' OF TIME AND MONEY!**

**GREATER VOLUME! HIGHER PROFITS! MAKES REFRIGERATION A THING
OF THE PAST!**

JOAN SMITH (CONT'D)
A powdered milkshake. Costs a
fraction of ice cream, no
refrigeration necessary.

ROLLIE SMITH
Thickening agents and emulsifiers
simulate the texture of milk fat.
Tastes just like the real thing.

JOAN KROC
And it's easy as pie to prepare.
Just pour the convenient single-
serving packet into water and stir.

ON KROC-- staring at the ad poker-faced. Rollie and Joan can't get a read on his reaction.

ROLLIE SMITH
I realize it may seem a tad
blasphemous, what with your dairy-
sector background and all.

JOAN SMITH
But personally...

Joan looks at Kroc, touches his hand.

JOAN SMITH (CONT'D)
I think it's a *marvelous* idea.

ON KROC-- privately quivering at the touch.

WAITER (O.S.)
Could I interest anyone in dessert?

The WAITER holds out a dessert menu to the table.

ROLLIE SMITH
No thanks, Vic.
(to Kroc, cryptic smile)
We brought our own.

MOMENTS LATER--

ANGLE ON a pair of SILVER-FOIL PACKETS in front of Joan.

JOAN SMITH
Chocolate or vanilla?

RAY KROC
Vanilla.

Joan takes one of the packets, marked "V", dumps the powdery contents into a glass. She pours in some water, stirs.

ON KROC-- watching with fascination as it thickens. Within seconds, it transforms into what looks like a vanilla shake.

Joan slides it to Kroc. All eyes on him as he takes a sip. A long, anxious BEAT from the table.

JOAN SMITH
What do you think?

RAY KROC
I think... I'm drinking a delicious
vanilla shake!

The table erupts in happy, relieved laughter.

JOAN SMITH

May I?

Kroc follows her eyes to the shake. He gives her a "be my guest" nod. She raises the glass to her lips, takes a long, languorous sip. Kroc watches, highly turned on.

She puts the glass down, smiles at Kroc.

JOAN SMITH (CONT'D)

I couldn't resist.

Kroc's gaze drifts to the glass. On the rim is a bright-red LIPSTICK MARK. He stares at it.

ROLLIE SMITH (O.S.)

So whaddaya say?

Kroc looks at Rollie, shaken out of his moment.

ROLLIE SMITH (CONT'D)

We try it out at our place. Then,
if it goes well...

JOAN SMITH

You roll it out nationally.

ON KROC-- suddenly a tad queasy, thinking of the brothers. He nods vaguely.

RAY KROC

I could.

A strange, shaky BEAT.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

Let me think about it.

Rollie and Joan nod, surprised. They were expecting a big, unreserved yes.

ROLLIE SMITH

Of course. You're the boss.

Kroc nods, privately churning. If they only knew.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Kroc is sitting on the bed looking at the Inst-A-Mix ad in "Restaurant Business Monthly". On the nightstand is a pint of Four Roses bourbon, empty. He dials the phone.

RAY KROC
Just hear me out.

INT. MCDONALD'S (SAN BERNARDINO) - NIGHT

The restaurant is closed. Dick is on the front-counter phone.

DICK MCDONALD
(instantly wary)
Hello, Ray.

ON MAC-- cleaning up in the background. His ears prick up.

RAY KROC
What if I told you there was a way
to save you, me, and all our owner-
operators literally hundreds of
dollars a year in electrical costs?

DICK MCDONALD
And what would that be?

RAY KROC
Two words: Powdered milkshake.
(before Dick can reply--)
There's a remarkable new product I
recently came across called Inst-A-
Mix. It's a powdered milkshake,
costs a fraction of ice cream, no
refrigeration necessary.

DICK MCDONALD
Ray--

RAY KROC
I tried it, and let me tell you, it
is delicious. Tastes just like the
real thing.

DICK MCDONALD
Is this some sort of joke?

RAY KROC
Comes in vanilla or chocolate.

DICK MCDONALD
Ray.

RAY KROC
Me, I'm a vanilla man.

DICK MCDONALD
I have no interest in a milkshake
that contains no milk.

RAY KROC
You won't be able to tell the
difference. Guarantee.

DICK MCDONALD
Why don't we put sawdust in the
hamburgers while we're at it?

RAY KROC
I'm being serious.

DICK MCDONALD
Frozen french fries!

RAY KROC
You don't want to save a bundle?

DICK MCDONALD
Not like that.

RAY KROC
We're talking the same great taste
while boosting your bottom line.

DICK MCDONALD
It's called a *milk* shake, Ray.

RAY KROC
Not to mention freeing up all that
cooler space. I don't know about
you, but I'd sure like to--

DICK MCDONALD
Milk. Now and forever.

ON KROC-- shut down. Yet again.

RAY KROC
Well, thanks for giving it your
full and sincere consideration.
(fed up)
As always.

MOTEL ROOM - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc silently gazes off. He FLINGS THE MAGAZINE across the
room, knocking over a lamp.

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - DAY

Kroc stares at the ever-growing mountain of bills on his desk. His gaze drifts to a letter from ILLINOIS FIRST FEDERAL marked **FINAL NOTICE**.

INT. ILLINOIS FIRST FEDERAL - DAY

Kroc is sitting with Harvey Peltz, his home-mortgage officer.

RAY KROC
You've got to extend my line.

HARVEY PELTZ
Until you build more equity in your home or pay down the loan...

RAY KROC
My business is booming.

HARVEY PELTZ
Unfortunately, that's immaterial.

RAY KROC
Thirteen locations in nine states!

HARVEY PELTZ
It's a home-equity loan.

RAY KROC
Then give me a business loan.

REVEAL, on the other side of a partition: a patrician, silver-haired BUSINESSMAN sitting across from an empty chair, listening in as he waits for his banker to return.

HARVEY PELTZ
These 13 locations. They're yours?

RAY KROC
Meaning?

HARVEY PELTZ
You own them?

RAY KROC
I mean, not in the strict sense.

HARVEY PELTZ
So then what are your assets?

RAY KROC
Mine personally?

HARVEY PELTZ

It is your business, correct? You own it?

RAY KROC

Not technically, per se.

The businessman cringes for the poor, floundering schlub on the other side of the partition.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

I'm the head of franchising. I'm the one behind all the growth.

HARVEY PELTZ

That's all well and good, but--

RAY KROC

Have you ever been to a McDonald's?

The name catches the businessman's ear.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

We've got three stores right here in the Chicagoland area. Perhaps if you swung by, took a look.

HARVEY PELTZ

That's quite alright.

RAY KROC

I'd be happy to give you a tour, give you a better sense of--

HARVEY PELTZ

Thank you. I've got the gist.

EXT. ILLINOIS FIRST FEDERAL - MOMENTS LATER

Kroc exits the bank in defeat. He slumps off toward his car.

BUSINESSMAN

Mr. Kroc.

Kroc turns, sees the man approaching. Kroc looks him over. Dressed in an impeccably tailored suit, he has the finished, cosmopolitan air of a New Yorker.

RAY KROC

Can I help you?

BUSINESSMAN

No. But perhaps I can help you.

He hands Kroc a business card. Kroc looks at it:

HARRY J. SONNEBORN - VICE-PRESIDENT OF FINANCE - THE TASTEE-FREEZ CORPORATION

RAY KROC

Thanks. We're perfectly happy with our current supplier.

Kroc hands back the card, starts to walk off.

HARRY SONNEBORN

I'm not looking to sell you ice cream.

RAY KROC

Then what do you want?

HARRY SONNEBORN

I caught a bit of your conversation back there. Sounds like you're having some financial troubles.

RAY KROC

Why don't you mind your own business?

HARRY SONNEBORN

I'm a great admirer of your establishment.

RAY KROC

That's very nice.

HARRY SONNEBORN

I lunch at your Waukegan location at least thrice a week. And not once have I ever failed to witness a large, avid crowd.

RAY KROC

Your point being...

HARRY SONNEBORN

If you're not making money hand over fist, something is gravely amiss.

This gets Kroc's attention.

INT. PRINCE CASTLE SALES - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc enters the office with Sonneborn. As they pass the front desk:

RAY KROC
June, fetch the ledger.

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc and Sonneborn sit in front of the ledger.

HARRY SONNEBORN
So to summarize, you have a miniscule revenue stream, no cash reserves, and an albatross of a contract that requires you to go through a glacially slow approval process to enact changes--*if* they're approved at all. Which they never are.

(BEAT)
Am I missing anything?

RAY KROC
I believe that covers it.

ON SONNEBORN-- thinking.

HARRY SONNEBORN
Tell me about the land.

RAY KROC
Land?

HARRY SONNEBORN
The land, the buildings, how that whole aspect of it works.

RAY KROC
Well, it's pretty simple really. The franchisee finds a piece of land he likes, takes out a lease. Usually 20-year. He gets himself a construction loan, puts up the building, and off he goes.

HARRY SONNEBORN
So the operator selects the site.

RAY KROC
Yes.

HARRY SONNEBORN
He picks the property. Not you.

Kroc nods, unsure why he's so curious about all of this.

HARRY SONNEBORN (CONT'D)
You supply the training, the
system, the operational know-how,
and he's responsible for the rest.

RAY KROC
Correct.

ON SONNEBORN-- processing. He seems troubled.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Is there a problem?

HARRY SONNEBORN
A big one.

RAY KROC
Which is?

HARRY SONNEBORN
That you don't seem to realize what
business you're in.
(BEAT)
You're not in the burger business.
You're in the real-estate business.

Kroc looks totally confused.

HARRY SONNEBORN (CONT'D)
You don't build an empire off a 1.4
percent cut of a 15-cent hamburger.
You build it by *owning the land*
upon which that burger is cooked.

ON KROC-- wrestling with this strange notion.

HARRY SONNEBORN (CONT'D)
What you ought to be doing is
buying up plots of land, then
turning around and leasing said
plots to franchisees, who as a
condition of their deal should be
permitted to lease from you and you
alone. This will provide you with
two things: One, a steady, upfront
revenue stream. Money flows in
before the first stake is in the
ground. Two, greater capital for
expansion.

(MORE)

HARRY SONNEBORN (CONT'D)

Which in turn fuels further land acquisition, which in turn fuels further expansion. And so on and so on.

(BEAT)

Land... That's where the money is.

(BEAT)

And control. Control over the franchisee: Fail to uphold quality standards, you cancel their lease. Control over Dick and Mac: Their power stops at the building's foundation. Yours goes to the soil.

ON KROC-- absorbing, registering the full significance.

RAY KROC

If I were to do this... the brothers... this would effectively...

HARRY SONNEBORN

Yes.

A long BEAT. Kroc searching his soul. We can almost see the Angel and the Devil on his shoulders.

HARRY SONNEBORN (CONT'D)

So whaddaya say, Ray?

MONTAGE:

The Harry & Ray Show. Sonneborn and Kroc jumping into action:

--Sonneborn taking meetings with BANKERS AND INVESTORS in New York City. Confidently presenting his sweeping vision to conference rooms of heavy hitters. He stands in sharp contrast to Kroc... Kroc is Main Street, Sonneborn is Wall Street. Kroc is a salesman, Sonneborn is a *businessman*.

--Hands being shaken, deals being struck.

--Kroc criss-crossing the country by plane shopping for land. Scouting suburban neighborhoods, plots of land near schools and churches. Fertile ground for the planting of arches.

--Kroc's U.S. map filling in with push pins. 15, 20, 30...

--Kroc and Sonneborn presiding over lease signings. MOLINE, NASHVILLE, ORLANDO, KALAMAZOO.

--New franchisees combing through thick, 100-page agreements. Glimpses of legalese:

...ANY AND ALL CHANGES OR MODIFICATIONS MUST BE...

...SHOULD LESSEE FAIL TO UPHOLD STANDARDS OF CONDUCT AND QUALITY AS DEEMED BY LESSOR, LESSOR HAS THE RIGHT TO...

Control. For Kroc.

END OF MONTAGE.

EXT. MCDONALD'S (SAN BERNARDINO) - MORNING

The restaurant, not yet open for the day. A MAILMAN goes over to Dick with a stack of mail. Dick opens a LETTER, troubled by what he sees.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Mac is wiping down the front counter.

DICK MCDONALD (O.S.)
Have you heard of the Franchise
Realty Corporation?

Mac turns, sees Dick holding the letter.

MAC MCDONALD
What is it?

DICK MCDONALD
I have no clue. But apparently Ray
Kroc is president and CEO.

Mac takes the letter, instantly nauseous.

ANGLE ON letter, written on **FRANCHISE REALTY CORPORATION** letterhead. The letter itself is some innocuous bit of McDonald's business from Kroc to the brothers. It's really just an excuse to flash the letterhead. And the signature at the bottom: **RAYMOND A. KROC - PRESIDENT/CEO**

INT. PRINCE CASTLE SALES - SHORT TIME LATER

June is at the front desk. She picks up a ringing phone.

JUNE MARTINO
Franchise Realty Corporation, how
may I direct your call?

Behind her, WORKMEN are taking down the Prince Castle Sales sign and putting up a new one in its place: **FRANCHISE REALTY CORPORATION**

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Kroc picks up his phone. (Intercut as necessary.)

RAY KROC
Hello, Dick. How are you?

DICK MCDONALD
Well, if you really want to know,
I'm tad miffed.

RAY KROC
What seems to be the trouble?

DICK MCDONALD
Franchise Realty Corporation.

RAY KROC
What about it?

DICK MCDONALD
For starters, would you mind
telling me what it is?

RAY KROC
Oh, nothing really. Just a little
something I created to help provide
leasing services and support to our
new franchisees.

Dick can practically hear Kroc's smirk through the phone.

DICK MCDONALD
You know full well you can't do
something like that without first
clearing it.

RAY KROC
Why would I need to do that?

DICK MCDONALD
Why? Because as your deal plainly
states, any and all changes must—

RAY KROC
It's not a change.

DICK MCDONALD
Excuse me?

RAY KROC
It's not a change. It's a company.
Its own separate company. Which
puts it outside of your purview.

DICK MCDONALD

Anything relating to McDonald's is
within our--

RAY KROC

You boys have full say over what
goes on inside the restaurants. But
outside? Above? Below?... Your
authority stops at the door. And
the floor.

ON MAC-- standing in the doorway, sick to his stomach. He
can't hear what Kroc is saying, but he knows it's not good.

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - ANOTHER DAY

Kroc is leaning against his desk, arms folded confidently, a
big grin on his face. It's a slightly weird sight until we
hear the click of a camera and realize it's a PHOTO SHOOT.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Let's try a few by the map.

The PHOTOGRAPHER leads Kroc to the expansion map, which is
significantly more crowded with pins now. Kroc strikes the
same pose, arms winningly crossed.

PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)

Good, good.

Kroc impulsively grabs a prop hamburger off the desk, holds
it up for the camera.

PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)

Love it.

Kroc playfully pretends to take a big bite.

PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)

(snapping away)

That's a riot!

INT. MCDONALD'S (ROLLIE SMITH) - DAY

Rollie is hustling about the kitchen, supervising the lunch
rush.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

(gruff)

Delivery.

He turns, expecting to see a delivery man. Instead, Ray Kroc is standing there, leaning against THREE BOXES on a dolly.

RAY KROC
(like a delivery guy)
Where ya want these?

INT. BACK OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Kroc looks on as Rollie opens one of the boxes, unsure what's inside.

ANGLE ON box's contents: hundreds of silver-foil packets.

ROLLIE SMITH
(excited, surprised)
Yeah?

RAY KROC
I've thought it over.

ON JOAN-- also there, anxiously awaiting Kroc's next words.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Approved.

JOAN SMITH
Really? Oh, thank you!

RAY KROC
Thank you. It's a whiz-bang idea.
And you thought of it.

Kroc revels in the feeling of playing kingmaker.

ROLLIE SMITH
Well, we're deeply honored to serve
as your test market.

RAY KROC
To heck with that. I'm rolling it
out nationally.

Joan gasps, honored, thrilled. Her idea, implemented across the country.

ON ROLLIE-- looking at Joan looking at Ray. We finally detect the first stirrings of jealousy.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Speaking of Inst-A-Mix, have you
seen the new issue of "RBM"?

Kroc reaches inside his coat, pulls out a copy of "Restaurant Business Monthly". Hands it to Rollie.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Hot off the press.

ON ROLLIE-- taking in the cover...

ANGLE ON magazine. Kroc is the cover boy. A big photo of him in his office, smiling, holding the hamburger. The headline:

**MCDONALD'S TAKES A BITE OUT OF THE COMPETITION - UPSTART
HAMBURGER EMPORIUM IS 'ON THE GROW'**

ON JOAN-- looking at Ray on the cover. Looking at Ray in the flesh.

INT. KROC'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ethel is asleep in bed, alone.

LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kroc is on the phone, speaking quietly.

RAY KROC
(intrigued)
Bloomington...

INT. ROLLIE AND JOAN SMITH'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Joan is on the kitchen phone, also speaking softly. She's wearing a nightie.

JOAN SMITH
It's about 10 miles south of
downtown. They're building a brand-
new sports stadium there.

RAY KROC
I read about that.

JOAN SMITH
We're getting a professional
baseball and football team. They'll
both be playing there.

RAY KROC
I think I see where you're going
with this...

JOAN SMITH

A 40,000-seat stadium, just a stone's throw away. Imagine the foot traffic.

RAY KROC

Hungry families looking for a bite after the ballgame.

JOAN SMITH

Or before. Whenever.

RAY KROC

I like the way you think, Joan. You think big.

JOAN SMITH

Is there any other way to?

RAY KROC

You'd be surprised.

His gaze drifts downward. To his wedding ring.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

A lot of people, they're scared. Of taking a chance. Reaching for greatness.

JOAN SMITH

That's so sad.

RAY KROC

I agree. Ambition, that's the stuff of life.

JOAN SMITH

What's that saying? "Fortune favors the bold."

RAY KROC

Absolutely.

JOAN SMITH

Just look at you.

RAY KROC

Are you calling me bold, Joan?

JOAN SMITH

You don't build a restaurant empire acting like a timid little mouse.

BEDROOM - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc lies in bed next to Ethel. His hands drift downward under the covers, toward his nether regions.

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - DAY

Kroc, Harry Sonneborn and Fred Turner stand huddled over a map of Texas.

HARRY SONNEBORN
(re: some city on map)
That's a fast-growing area.

The phone rings outside the room.

HARRY SONNEBORN (CONT'D)
And cheaper. You're talking a good
15 percent less per acre.

RAY KROC
I still say Houston's the move.

JUNE MARTINO (O.S.)
Sir?

June Martino is standing in the doorway.

JUNE MARTINO (CONT'D)
Dick on line one.

INT. MCDONALD'S - SAN BERNARDINO - CONTINUOUS

Dick on the phone in his office, Mac in the background.

DICK MCDONALD
I just got a very disconcerting
call.

Kroc on the other end--Harry, Fred and June listening in. Kroc has a smug, cocky air, "playing to the crowd" a bit.

RAY KROC
Oh?

DICK MCDONALD
From Buddy Jepsen. Our operator in
Sacramento.

RAY KROC
I'm well aware who Buddy Jepsen is.

DICK MCDONALD
He told me he received a shipment
this morning.

RAY KROC
It arrived?

DICK MCDONALD
You are way out of line, Ray.

RAY KROC
I figured it wouldn't get there
until Friday the earliest.

DICK MCDONALD
Would you mind telling me what
you're doing shipping four cases of
Inst-A-Mix to one of our operators?

RAY KROC
If you're not interested in turning
a profit, that's fine. But please
don't stop the rest of us.

DICK MCDONALD
Us?

RAY KROC
Us. As in everyone but you.

DICK MCDONALD
Who did you send them to?

RAY KROC
Everyone but you.

DICK MCDONALD
You have no right, Ray. You are to
stop this instant. Is that clear?

RAY KROC
Nah.

DICK MCDONALD
Excuse me?

RAY KROC
You heard me. Nah.

DICK MCDONALD
What the hell's that mean?

RAY KROC

It means from now on I'll be doing things my way.

DICK MCDONALD

You will abide by the terms of your deal.

RAY KROC

I'm through taking marching orders from you. Bowing to your dictates. You and your endless parade of nos.

DICK MCDONALD

You have a *contract*.

RAY KROC

Don't grow, don't change... Cower in the face of progress...

DICK MCDONALD

If phony powdered milkshakes is your idea of progress, you have a profound misunderstanding of what McDonald's is about.

RAY KROC

I have a far better understanding of McDonald's than you two yokels.

DICK MCDONALD

What did you say?

RAY KROC

You heard me.

DICK MCDONALD

You will do as we say.

RAY KROC

Nope.

DICK MCDONALD

You have a *contract*.

RAY KROC

Contracts are like hearts. They're made to be broken.

INT. KROC'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Kroc and Ethel eat dinner together in edgy silence. All we hear is the sound of knife scraping plate as meat is cut.

ETHEL KROC
 Please pass the salt.
 (he passes it)
 Thank you.

RAY KROC
 You're welcome.

Another stretch of silence. Cutting and chewing.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
 I want a divorce.

INT. LAWYER'S OFFICE - DAY

The big, oak-paneled office of a top Chicago law firm. Kroc sits across from a LAWYER.

LAWYER
 It's not so simple.

He looks down at a document in his hand, Kroc's contract with the brothers.

LAWYER (CONT'D)
 This contract, it's ironclad.

RAY KROC
 I don't care what it takes...

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. ANOTHER LAWYER'S OFFICE - DAY

Virtually the identical scene, except a different office and different LAWYER.

RAY KROC
 Just get me out.

LAWYER #2
 She's gonna put up one hell of a fight.

RAY KROC
 She can have it all. The house, the car, the insurance policy...

LAWYER #2
 (treading lightly)
 What about the...

RAY KROC

Never. I'd sooner die than give
that woman one share of McDonald's.

INT. MCDONALD'S (SAN BERNARDINO) - OFFICE - DAY

Dick enters the office. He notices a package on his desk, addressed to him and Mac. He opens it, pulls out a silver-foil Inst-A-Mix packet. It's stamped "S".

Dick reaches in, pulls out a handwritten note from Kroc:

NEW FLAVOR... STRAWBERRY. MAYBE YOU'LL LIKE THIS ONE!

--BEST, RAY

His dismay is soon eclipsed by something else:

The note from Kroc; it's not on Franchise Realty Corporation letterhead. The letterhead says **THE MCDONALD'S CORPORATION**. It's signed at the bottom **RAYMOND A. KROC - PRESIDENT**.

INT. FRANCHISE REALTY CORPORATION - SHORT TIME LATER

Workmen are taking down the Franchise Realty Corporation sign at the front desk, a new one going up in its place: **THE MCDONALD'S CORPORATION**.

RAY KROC (O.S.)

It was confusing.

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Kroc on the phone.

RAY KROC

No one knew it had anything to do
with McDonald's.

INT. SAN BERNARDINO - CONTINUOUS

Dick on the other end. Mac there, too.

DICK MCDONALD

What's confusing is you calling
yourself the McDonald's
Corporation.

ON MAC-- listening, strangely calm.

DICK MCDONALD (CONT'D)
 People will think it's the whole
 company, not just the real-estate
 arm. Which I strongly suspect is
 what you hope.

Without warning, Mac SNATCHES THE PHONE out of Dick's hands--

MAC MCDONALD
 IT'S NOT YOUR COMPANY, RAY!

RAY KROC
 Mac.

MAC MCDONALD
 Do you understand that?

RAY KROC
 Don't get all bent out of shape.

MAC MCDONALD
 We came up with the Speedee System,
 not you. Us. What did you ever come
 up with, Ray? Name one thing. You
 can't. Because you never have and
 you never will. You're a leech!
 You're a professional leech!

ON DICK-- stunned by his brother's outburst.

RAY KROC
 Would you like to know what I came
 up with? I'll tell you, Mac. I came
 up with a concept. A highly novel
 concept called winning. You boys
 are content to sit back and be a
 couple of also-rans. To let the
 future run roughshod over you. Me,
 I want to *take* the future. I want
 to win. And you don't get there by
 being some aw-shucks, nice-guy sap.
 There's no place in business for
 people like that. Business is war.
 It's rat eat rat, dog eat dog. If
 my competitor was drowning, I'd
 reach out and stick a goddamn hose
 in his mouth. Can you say the same?

MAC MCDONALD
 I can't, nor would I want to.

RAY KROC
 Hence your single location.

MAC MCDONALD

I want you out of this company.

RAY KROC

And how do you propose to do that?

MAC MCDONALD

Whatever it takes. We'll sue you if necessary.

RAY KROC

You couldn't afford to sue me. I could bury you in court costs alone. I'm the president and CEO of a major corporation with landholdings in 17 states. You run a burger stand in the desert.

(blistering, nuclear)

I'm national. You're fucking local.

Kroc hears a loud THUD through the phone.

Mac has COLLAPSED to the floor.

The wail of an AMBULANCE SIREN carries us to--

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Mac lies in a hospital bed looking pale and weak. Dick stands by as DR. REEVES talks to Mac.

DR. REEVES

You've been following your eating plan?

(Mac nods)

Checking your glucose levels?

(Mac nods)

Taking your medication on a consistent basis?

(Mac nods)

Regular walks, 20 minutes a day?

(Mac nods)

No smoking?

(Mac nods)

Any stress?

MAC MCDONALD

(BEAT, understatement of century)

Some.

DR. REEVES

You need to watch that. It's a big contributing factor.

The doctor flips to a page in Mac's chart.

DR. REEVES (CONT'D)

As I said, your kidney function's currently at 50 percent. 18 months ago, it was 65. Any lower, you're at serious risk for kidney failure.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Mac is doing a crossword puzzle, Dick in a chair nearby.

MAC MCDONALD

"William Who Rode With Paul Revere."

DICK MCDONALD

How many letters?

MAC MCDONALD

Five, fourth letter E.

DICK MCDONALD

Dawes.

Mac pencils it in. A knock at the door.

MAC MCDONALD

Come in.

Mac and Dick look toward the door, stunned to see...

Ray Kroc, holding a bouquet of flowers.

RAY KROC

How ya feelin'?

The brothers glare at their unexpected, unwelcome guest.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

That was some spill. Felt it all the way through the phone.

Kroc extends the flowers to Mac.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

For you.

Mac takes the flowers like they're potentially laced with anthrax. He glances at the card attached.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

Open it.

MAC MCDONALD

That's alright.

RAY KROC

Please. I think you'll like it.

Mac reaches in the envelope, pulls out a GET-WELL CARD. He opens the card. A CHECK falls out. Blank.

MAC MCDONALD

What's this?

RAY KROC

What's it look like?

MAC MCDONALD

It looks like a blank check.

RAY KROC

Then that's probably what it is.

Mac and Dick look at each other.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

How much should I make it out for?

MAC MCDONALD

What are you buying?

Kroc flashes them a "You don't know?" smirk.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Mac and Dick both gazing off gloomily. After a long stretch of silence--

MAC MCDONALD

We'll never beat him.

(BEAT)

We'll never be rid of him.

ON DICK-- absorbing. He knows Mac is right.

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - DAY

Kroc is standing before the franchise map. There are nearly 50 PINS in it now. The intercom buzzes.

JUNE MARTINO (O.S.)
Dick McDonald.

Kroc picks up, friendly and casual.

RAY KROC
Hiya, Dick.

On the other end is Dick, in the KITCHEN in San Bernardino.

DICK MCDONALD
\$2.7 million.
(BEAT)
A million for each of us after
taxes.

ON KROC-- taken aback by the staggering sum.

DICK MCDONALD (CONT'D)
And one percent of the company's
profits in perpetuity.

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - DAY

Kroc is pacing furiously before Harry Sonneborn.

RAY KROC
It's outrageous! Borderline
extortion!

Sonneborn is holding a document. A PURCHASE PROPOSAL from the brothers.

HARRY SONNEBORN
And they want one other thing.

RAY KROC
What?

HARRY SONNEBORN
San Bernardino.

Kroc is taken aback.

HARRY SONNEBORN (CONT'D)
To give to their longtime
employees. As a gift.

RAY KROC

I need San Bernardino. I was counting on its profits to cover the debt on the purchase loan.

HARRY SONNEBORN

I've spoken at length about it with their lawyers. It's unfortunately non-negotiable.

ON KROC-- calmly absorbing.

INT. LAW OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Kroc and the brothers in a conference room, flanked by their respective teams of LAWYERS.

KROC LAWYER

Our client agrees fully to your conditions of sale. With one exception. Your one percent cut of future corporate earnings will have to be carried out on a handshake basis.

RAY KROC

On the insistence of my investor group. Their financing is contingent on leaving it out of the contract. It's unfortunately a dealbreaker for them.

Dick and Mac look at each other, extremely wary.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

You have my word you'll get your full due royalties.

He extends his hand, holding it out to them.

CONFERENCE ROOM - SHORT TIME LATER

Mac and Dick sit alone in the conference room as their lawyers pack up. (Kroc and his team are gone.)

ON MAC-- staring somberly at a check in his hands for \$1,350,000.

ON DICK-- staring somberly at a check in his hands for \$1,350,000.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Kroc is at the urinal in the law office's men's room. He flushes, heads to the sink to wash his hands.

The rest room door opens. In walks Dick. He freezes at the sight of Kroc. Kroc smiles amiably at him in the mirror.

RAY KROC
Hello, Dick.

ON DICK-- gazing searchingly at Kroc.

DICK MCDONALD
I just have to ask you one thing.
Something I've never understood.

RAY KROC
Alright.

DICK MCDONALD
That day we met, when we gave you
the tour.

RAY KROC
What about it?

DICK MCDONALD
We showed you everything. The whole
system, all our secrets. We were an
open book.
(Kroc nods)
So why didn't you just--

RAY KROC
Rip you off? Run off and start my
own place using your ideas?
(Dick nods)
Because it would have failed.

DICK MCDONALD
How do you know?

RAY KROC
Am I the only one who ever got the
kitchen tour? I bet you invited
loads of people back there.
Countless would-be burger barons
looking to replicate your success.

DICK MCDONALD
And?

RAY KROC
How many succeeded?

DICK MCDONALD
Lots of people started restaurants.

RAY KROC
Bigger than McDonald's?
(Dick is silent)
Of course not. No one has and no
one ever will. Because they all
lack that one thing that makes
McDonald's special.

DICK MCDONALD
Which is...

RAY KROC
Even you don't know!

DICK MCDONALD
Enlighten me.

RAY KROC
It's not just the system. It's the
name.

Dick doesn't follow.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
That name. That glorious name.
McDonald. It's wide open.
Limitless. It could be anything,
whatever you want it to be. It
sounds like... America.
(BEAT)
Compare that to, oh, say, Kroc. Now
there's a real lemon. Kroc. *What a
crock. Load of crock. Crock of
shit.* Would you eat at a place
called Kroc's? It's enough to make
you lose your appetite, a blunt,
Slavic thing like that. But
McDonald's, now *that's* a name. A
fine, handsome, all-American name.
That's a winner's name, the name of
somebody who's got the world by the
tail. A man named McDonald is never
going to get pushed around in life.

DICK MCDONALD
That's clearly not the case.

RAY KROC

So you don't have a check for \$1.35 million in your pocket?

Dick is silenced.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

That's the mistake your competitors made. All those would-be imitators. They assumed they could simply take your system, slap on some name like Hamburger Hamlet or Roscoe's, and presto! Instant success! Not me, I wasn't so arrogant. I knew there's no beating a name like McDonald's.

DICK MCDONALD

And if you can't beat 'em...

RAY KROC

Buy 'em.

Dick chuckles in disgust.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

I'll never forget the first time I saw that name stretched across the front of your stand. It was love at first sight. From that moment, I knew I just had to have it. And now I do.

DICK MCDONALD

You don't "have" it.

RAY KROC

You sure about that?

Kroc throws him an unnerving smile.

EXT. MCDONALD'S (SAN BERNARDINO) - DAY

ANGLE ON the McDonald's sign in front of the restaurant.

PAN DOWN TO... Dick and Mac with Kroc's lawyers, listening like they're being read their Miranda rights.

KROC LAWYER

As per the terms of your agreement, while you are entitled to maintain ownership of this location, you no longer have the right to call it McDonald's, McDonald or any other such variation so as to create confusion or infringe upon the McDonald's trademark which is now the exclusive intellectual property of Mr. Raymond A. Kroc.

DISSOLVE TO:

Workers dismantling the McDonald's sign. The brothers watch helplessly as their name is removed from their own store.

DISSOLVE TO:

A new sign going up in its place. With a new name--

THE BIG M

Below this, it says, with a whiff of desperation:

"WE HAVE BEEN HERE 23 YEARS!"

The sign is as close to a McDonald's marquee as is legally possible, but it's just not McDonald's. It's heartbreaking.

PAN ACROSS THE STREET, where we see...

A NEW MCDONALD'S under construction. A hard-hatted Kroc is on site, watching as the signature Golden Arches go up.

YOUNG MAN (O.S.)

Mr. Kroc?

A YOUNG MAN comes over, slightly nervous to approach.

YOUNG MAN (CONT'D)

My name is Will Davis. I'm a reporter for the Los Angeles Times. I'm interested in doing a profile of you pegged to the opening of your hundredth location here.

A BEAT as Kroc thinks it over.

RAY KROC

Call my office. They'll set it up.

He reaches into the breast pocket of his sport coat.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Here's my card.

He hands a BUSINESS CARD to the reporter. He looks at it.

ANGLE ON card. Beneath a McDonald's logo, it says, simply:

RAY KROC - FOUNDER

We hold on this for a long BEAT.

RAY KROC (PRE-LAP)
Now, I know what you're thinking...

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS MANSION - DAY

A lavish, gated MANSION. A BLACK LIMOUSINE pulls into the driveway.

INT. MANSION - MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

A tuxedo-clad Ray Kroc stands before a mirror, stack of index cards in hand. He's 68 now; it's nine years later, 1970.

RAY KROC
How the heck does an over-the-hill
52-year-old milkshake-machine
salesman build a fast-food empire
with 1,600 restaurants in 50 states
and five foreign countries, with
annual revenues in the neighborhood
of \$700 million? It's quite simple:
persistence.

He turns to the next card.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Nothing in the world can take the
place of good old persistence.
Talent won't. Nothing's more common
than unsuccessful men with talent.
Genius won't. Unrecognized genius
is practically a cliché.

His words have a familiar ring... They're lifted straight from "The Power Of The Positive" by Dr. Clarence Floyd Nelson (the record from the beginning of the movie), with just a bit of rephrasing to make it "his own".

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Education won't. The world is full
of educated fools.
(MORE)

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Persistence and determination alone
are all-powerful.

He pauses a beat to let his words of wisdom sink in.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
There's no obstacle under the sun
that can't be overcome with honest
hard work and determination. It's
these core principles that enabled
me to rise to the top of the heap
at a point in life when most men
would be thinking about retirement.
(glances to side, sly
grin)
We appear to have that in common,
Mr. Governor.

He pauses for laughter.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
You were, what, 55 when you started
in politics? Why, you make me look
like a spring chicken!

Another pause for laughter.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Look at us, a couple of small-town
Illinois boys made good. Only in
America...

He continues talking to Mr. Governor off to the side--

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
By the way, thank you for that
splendid introduction. To be named
California Chamber of Commerce Man
of The Year is thrill enough, but
to be presented the award by my
dear friend and golf buddy Ronald
Reagan, well, that's just the
cherry on the sundae.

He turns to the next index card.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Now where was I? Ah, yes, the
beginning. The year was 1954. The
place, Des Plaines, Illinois.
That's where it all started. Right
there on Lee Street--

JOAN KROC (O.S.)
The car's out front.

Joan Smith, now Joan Kroc, comes up behind him.

RAY KROC
(to her reflection)
Be right down.

She nods, exits the room.

Kroc looks down at the card in his hand, finding his place:

IT ALL STARTED. RIGHT THERE ON LEE STREET... MCDONALD'S #1

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
--McDonald's #1.

Kroc's eyes linger on those words on the card: **MCDONALD'S #1.**

He looks up, stares at himself in the mirror for a long BEAT.

As he takes in his reflection, we detect a flicker of something on his face. Regret? Guilt?...

It may have just been our imagination.

He tucks the index cards in his pocket, stands up.

INT. LIMOUSINE - MOMENTS LATER

Kroc and Joan Smith (now JOAN KROC) ride in the back of a stretch limo. She's in a powder-blue gown, draped in diamonds and pearls.

LIMO DRIVER
Comfortable, Mr. Kroc?

An air conditioning vent blows cool air on Kroc.

RAY KROC
Oh, yes.
(placid)
Very.

CAMERA slowly pushes in on Kroc's face as he rides in silence. He looks at Joan, smiles.

He indeed seems comfortable. Very.

FADE TO BLACK.

POSTSCRIPT:

Ray Kroc's San Bernardino McDonald's was an instant hit, drawing customers away from The Big M across the street, forcing it to close. The McDonald brothers were driven out of business by a McDonald's.

Kroc later reneged on the handshake deal for the one percent cut of royalties. The brothers never received a cent. Today, that one percent would be worth \$200 million annually. Each.

From the moment Kroc took ownership, his business card listed his title as "Founder". Until his death decades later, calls to McDonald's headquarters asking the origin of the name were told it was made up.

Kroc married Joan Smith in 1969. They remained together until his death in 1984.

In 1971, Mac died of diabetes-related illness. His brother Dick passed away in 1998.

Harry Sonneborn and Ray Kroc had a falling out in 1967. Sonneborn sold all his shares in McDonald's and never spoke to Kroc again.

Thanks to Sonneborn's idea, McDonald's is today the largest owner of real estate in the world.

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