

THE FOUNDER

by
Robert Siegel

April 4, 2014

Agent: Gregory McKnight
Creative Artists Agency
424-288-2000

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. Paul, 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 shakes? Or are you not selling enough 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 milkshake 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 same mistake again. But if you had, say, a Prince Castle five-spindle Multimixer with patented direct-drive electric motor, you could greatly increase your ability to produce delicious, frosty 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 your 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 Mulitmixer 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. 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 a tremendous amount of 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 shouldn't I believe you?

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.

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.

The sound of SNORING brings us back to Kroc. Out cold.

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 pulled pork!

He's shouting into the void.

EXT. MERRIMAN'S DRIVE-IN - LATER

Another drive-in. Kroc heaves his Multimixer into his trunk.

INT. PAY PHONE - SHORT TIME LATER

A pay phone across the street from Merriman's. A dispirited Kroc dials 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
(taken aback)
Six?

JUNE MARTINO
Some drive-in out in California.

RAY KROC
One place? Are you sure?

JUNE MARTINO
I've got the slip right here.

RAY KROC
That makes no sense.

JUNE MARTINO
I'm positive.

RAY KROC
You must have misunderstood. Maybe
they meant six spindles.

JUNE MARTINO
Mixers.

RAY KROC
What the heck kind of drive-in
needs six Multimixers?

JUNE MARTINO
Apparently this one.

RAY KROC
Where'd you say they are?

JUNE MARTINO
California. San Bernardino. Not
sure where that is.

RAY KROC
Who'd you talk to?

JUNE MARTINO
The owner. A man named...
(checks slip)
Mac McDonald.

SHORT TIME LATER--

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

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

RAY KROC
Mac McDonald, please.

YOUNG MALE EMPLOYEE (O.S.)
Who may I say is calling?

RAY KROC
Ray Kroc. Prince Castle Sales.

YOUNG MALE EMPLOYEE (O.S.)
Hold, please.

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

MAC MCDONALD (O.S.)
This is Mac.

RAY KROC
Hello, Mac. This is Ray Kroc. From
Prince Castle Sales.

MAC MCDONALD
(not recognizing)
Alright...

RAY KROC
The Multimixers.

MAC MCDONALD
Yes, yes, of course!

RAY KROC
So I'm calling about your order...

MAC MCDONALD
How soon can we expect shipment?
We're desperate.

RAY KROC
That's actually why I was calling.
I think there may have been a
miscommunication between you and--

In the background, someone shouts something to Mac.

MAC MCDONALD
In the freezer! Top shelf, left!
(back to Kroc)
I'm sorry. Go on.

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

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

RAY KROC
That's what I said! There's no way--

MAC MCDONALD
Better make it eight.

ON KROC-- flabbergasted. Another background shout.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
What's that, Al? Use the ones from
the store room! There's a whole new
box!
(to Kroc)
Listen, now isn't the best time to
talk. Just try to get those mixers
out here ASAP, alright? Thanks!

Click.

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

His gaze drifts across the street. To a SERVICE STATION.

INT. TEXACO SERVICE STATION - MOMENTS LATER

Kroc is at the register, buying a U.S. road map.

EXT. TEXACO STATION - MOMENTS LATER

Kroc stands outside the station looking at the map. His eyes roam California, searching. Finally, he finds it. There it is, about 60 miles east of Los Angeles: San Bernardino.

Kroc pulls back, looks at the whole country. He notices something interesting. 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 up 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
That'll be 45 cents, please.

Kroc hands him two quarters.

CASHIER (CONT'D)
Five cents is your change.

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

CASHIER (CONT'D)
Here you are, sir.

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

RAY KROC
What's this?

CASHIER
Your food.

RAY KROC
I just ordered.

CASHIER
And now it's here.

Kroc peers into the bag, confused. Inside is a hamburger, fries, and a Coca-Cola in a paper cup.

Kroc lingers awkwardly at the register, 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. Or home. Anywhere you like, really.

Kroc nods. This is all bizarre to him.

INT. KROC'S CAR - PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Kroc sits in his car, McDonald's bag in his lap. Out the corner of his eye in a nearby car, he sees 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 her. He looks down at his crotch. He reaches into the McDonald's bag.

He takes out the burger, taking note of the odd paper packaging. He unwraps the hamburger, looking at it, sniffing it. It looks and smells wonderful.

He takes a bite, chews. His eyes roll back in his head. A small moan.

MAN (O.S.)
How is everything?

Kroc looks up, startled. A MAN is standing outside his window. His necktie and demeanor suggest manager.

RAY KROC
This is the best hamburger I've ever had.

MAN
(smile)
We aim to please.

The man 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.

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

MAC MCDONALD
The Multimixer fella!

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

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

RAY KROC
Oh, I was just in Los Angeles. For some meetings. Clients. Figured as long as I was in the neighborhood, I'd swing by and 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 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 burger gets two pickles and 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 buy those things?

MAC MCDONALD
 We didn't. We made 'em.

RAY KROC
 You *made* them?

MAC MCDONALD
 (nods)
 Custom built. The whole kitchen is.

ON KROC-- utterly amazed.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
 (resuming)
 Then 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?
(BEAT)
I didn't.

Kroc is confused.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
(sly grin)
He did.

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

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
Meet 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 them?

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. He frowns a little.

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. He shakes his head, not seeing it.

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

DICK MCDONALD

Who are you?

MAC MCDONALD

This is the Multimixer fella.

RAY KROC

Ray Kroc, Prince Castle Sales.

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

DICK MCDONALD

How fast can you get 'em out here?

RAY KROC

ASAP. Blue Label Air.

DICK MCDONALD

Good.

Dick abruptly walks off, leaving Ray and Mac standing there.

MAC MCDONALD

(glances at watch)

I oughta get back to it myself.

He heads toward the front of the restaurant. Kroc follows.

RAY KROC

Let me take you out to dinner.

MAC MCDONALD

You're really not my type.

RAY KROC

You and your brother.

MAC MCDONALD

What for?

RAY KROC

Mac, I'm gonna shoot straight with you. This restaurant is the most remarkable thing I've seen in all my years in the food-service industry. And believe me, I've seen it all. I want to know everything about it. Where it came from, how you thought of it.

(eye contact)

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, it seemed. So we packed our bags and headed west. To Hollywood. I wanted to be in the movie business. And Dick, he wanted to be in, well, anything.

Dick gives a tiny nod as he chews his steak.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)

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 great--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 fellow, 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. It did alright, enough to keep us off the bread line, but we were hardly doing gangbusters. There just weren't enough people in Arcadia. 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 brilliant brother here gets one of his ideas. Tell him, Dick.

Dick gives a nod of deferral. That's okay, you tell.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)

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

(BEAT)

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

He looks to Dick, who defers again.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
*"Why don't we saw the restaurant in
 half?"* We truck the thing over in
 two pieces, put it back together!

Kroc guffaws. Mac gives Dick's skull a loving squeeze.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
 Who thinks of that?

RAY KROC
 Wow.

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. Two months later, we
 open for business...

(show-biz hands)

"McDonald's Famous Barbecue!"

(BEAT)

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.
 The drive-in model, as we discover,
 has got a few built-in problems.

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

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

DICK MCDONALD
 (grim nod)
 Teenagers.

MAC MCDONALD
 Hot rodders and hooligans.

RAY KROC
 Juvenile delinquents in blue jeans.

MAC MCDONALD

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.

MAC 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

We're about to throw in the towel when Dick has a realization. One day, while 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 nonsense? Focus on what *sells*.

RAY KROC

Yes.

MAC MCDONALD

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? Turns out, quite a lot.

DICK MCDONALD

Carhops.

MAC MCDONALD

Walk up to a window. Get your food yourself.

DICK MCDONALD

Dishes.

MAC MCDONALD

All paper packaging. Disposable.

DICK MCDONALD

Jukeboxes. Cigarette machines.

MAC MCDONALD

Drive out the riff-raff. Create a family-friendly environment.

Kroc nods, connecting immensely.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)

And finally, the biggest, most crucial cut of all: *The wait*.

DICK MCDONALD

30 seconds, not 30 minutes.

MAC MCDONALD

We decide to tear down the kitchen. Rebuild, reconfigure, rethink the whole darn thing. And you're gonna love how we do it. Tell him, Dick. Tell him what you do.

DICK MCDONALD

The tennis court?

MAC MCDONALD

He brings me to this tennis court, takes a stick, draws an outline in the dirt. Exact dimensions of our kitchen. He brings in a bunch of employees, has them go through the motions, moving around the court making imaginary hamburgers, shakes and fries. Dick's following after them with the stick, marking up where all the equipment should go. They do it over and over, tweaking, adjusting, hashing out the moves. Choreographing like it's some kinda crazy burger ballet. Finally, after about six hours of this, we get it perfect. A symphony of efficiency, not a wasted motion.

(MORE)

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)

We take the layout to a builder, have it custom-made to the exact specs. Ta-da! The Speedee System is born, the world's first assembly line for food. It's totally revolutionary.

DICK MCDONALD

And a complete disaster.

MAC MCDONALD

Opening day, people pull into the lot, they 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?" Most of them just cuss us out and drive off. The few that stick around are outraged about having to eat off paper and throw out their own trash.

DICK MCDONALD

We may have underestimated the learning curve.

MAC MCDONALD

By five o'clock, Dick's already 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! We rent a bunch of spotlights, the very same ones we used to truck around to premieres in the Columbia days. I get a brass band, a juggler for the kiddies, it's an event. People show up in droves. And then...

DICK MCDONALD

The flies.

MAC MCDONALD

Swarms of them. Millions.

DICK MCDONALD

They must have been drawn by all the lights.

MAC MCDONALD

People are running, screaming. It's a complete disaster. Towel time.

(BEAT)

The next morning, Dick and I meet up at the restaurant to discuss going back to the old format. As we're talking, there's a knock at the service window. Dick goes over, he sees a little boy standing there. Wants a bag of burgers.

DICK MCDONALD

I tell him we're closed.

MAC MCDONALD

But he's a cute kid, I feel bad. I fire up the grill, make him a batch. As he's heading off, a car pulls into the lot. Then another. And another. Before long, there's lines around the block.

(amazed smile)

Word has spread.

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 MCDONALD (CONT'D)

(shrugs)

So that's our story.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

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

EXT. MCDONALD'S - NEXT MORNING

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

KROC, sitting on a bench out front. Kroc pops up, approaches the car. Before Dick can fully roll down his window:

RAY KROC

Franchise.

DICK MCDONALD

I beg your pardon?

RAY KROC

Franchise. Franchise this thing. It's too good to be just 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. I've paid sales calls to them all.

DICK MCDONALD

Mr. Kroc...

RAY KROC

Let me just say one more thing. One more thing. I want to confess something to you boys. I'm not out here in California for any business meetings. I'm out here for you. You're what brought me out here. A few days ago, I was standing outside a filling station in St. Louis, staring at a U.S. road map. Staring at a long, white 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 there in St. Louis all the way out to California, where it ran smack-dab into this place where we're standing 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 hundreds of people lined up to buy your remarkable product, I just knew it was--

DICK MCDONALD

We already tried!!

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

Kroc stands before a wall with the brothers.

MAC MCDONALD

Five.

They're looking at a MAP of California and the southwest, five red pushpins in it.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)

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

DICK MCDONALD

And that's all there will ever be.

RAY KROC

How come?

MAC MCDONALD

Two words: Quality control.

DICK MCDONALD

It's nigh impossible to enforce any real standards from afar.

RAY KROC

But if you had someone in charge of supervising...

MAC MCDONALD

We did.

RAY KROC

What happened?

MAC MCDONALD

He fell ill.

RAY KROC

So replace him.

DICK MCDONALD

It's not worth the hassle. Our energies are far better spent making sure this restaurant is the best it can possibly be.

RAY KROC

But if you had somebody else worrying about it--

DICK MCDONALD
 (sharp)
Not worth the hassle.

Kroc looks at Mac, who nods in agreement with his brother-- not entirely convincingly. Does Kroc detect a rift between the brothers on this issue?

DICK MCDONALD (CONT'D)
 Thanks, anyway.

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 MCDONALD
 The arches? Those were Dick's idea.
 A way to make the place stand out
 when you're driving past.

Kroc stares at them, intrigued.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
 (admiring smile)
 "The Golden Arches", I call 'em.

RAY KROC
 Ever build one like that?

MAC MCDONALD
 Just one.
 (BEAT)
 Phoenix.

Kroc's eyes go to the Phoenix pushpin.

EXT. ROUTE 66 - FLAGSTAFF, ARIZ. - NIGHT

Kroc is driving through Flagstaff, heading home on Route 66. 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. ROUTE 66 - SOMEWHERE IN OKLAHOMA - NEXT DAY

Kroc is driving through the heartland, 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.

INT. KROC'S HOUSE (DES PLAINES, IL) - EVENING - NEXT DAY

A modest home in the Chicago suburbs. Kroc comes bursting through the door.

RAY KROC
(looking around)
Ethel!

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

ETHEL (53) is at the table, eating dinner by herself. Kroc comes bursting in, burning with excitement.

RAY KROC
I've seen the future!

ON ETHEL-- seeing that look in his eye. Her face falls.

ETHEL KROC
Not again.

RAY KROC

(ignoring)

I saw a restaurant, Ethel. Like nothing you've ever seen. It's going to change the way people—

ETHEL KROC

No, Ray.

RAY KROC

This is different.

ETHEL KROC

It's always different. Every time.

RAY KROC

Just hear me out.

ETHEL KROC

"The Fold-A-Nook! The miraculous fold-out dining table that will forever change the American kitchen!"

RAY KROC

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

ETHEL KROC

"The wax paper cup!"

RAY KROC

They've got this system, it's called the "Speedee System"--

ETHEL KROC

(to self)

Stupid you. You actually thought he wouldn't pull this again.

RAY KROC

Just hear me out.

ETHEL KROC

I'm too old to start over, Ray. I can't do it again.

RAY KROC

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

ETHEL KROC

I want to be part of a cruise.

(BEAT)

(MORE)

ETHEL KROC (CONT'D)

All our friends are taking trips, getting ready for retirement, enjoying their golden years. And us? We're still scrapping and scraping like a couple of 25-year-olds. Like a couple of dopes.

RAY KROC

There'll be plenty of time for trips.

ETHEL KROC

When, Ray?

RAY KROC

Soon. I promise.

ETHEL KROC

Dorothy and Walter are on the Queen Mary.

RAY KROC

We can do that.

ETHEL KROC

Don and Rosalie just went to Cuba.

RAY KROC

If this is as big as I think, we can buy Cuba.

ETHEL KROC

I don't want to buy Cuba, I just want to sip a rum punch there!

RAY KROC

All I'm talking about is a little temporary sacrifice.

ETHEL KROC

Sacrifice? Sacrifice? All I've done is sacrifice! 30 years, tightening our belts, going into debt, digging out of holes--only to have you throw us in a new one.

RAY KROC

Ethel...

ETHEL KROC

And here we go again. Just when we're finally getting our heads above water, just when we finally paid off that horrid second mortgage you took out to buy into Multimixer, you find some new windmill to chase.

RAY KROC

This is no windmill. It's a restaurant.

(wide-eyed)

A hamburger stand.

ETHEL KROC

Hamburger stand?

RAY KROC

That doesn't even begin to do it justice.

ETHEL KROC

A hamburger stand?!

(throws up hands, disgust)

For the love of Pete!

He glares at her, pissed.

RAY KROC

You know what, Ethel? I've just about had it with your small-mindedness.

ETHEL KROC

And I've just about had it with your mind. One cockamamie idea after another. And now, the cockamamiest of all.

RAY KROC

I should have known better than to expect you'd get it.

ETHEL KROC

What's to get? You're going to dive headlong into this thing, and then at some point down the road, you're either going to get bored and move on, or it's gonna crash and burn. More likely the latter.

RAY KROC

Maybe if I had a wife who had an ounce of vision, who gave me an ounce of support.

ETHEL KROC

Don't blame me for your middling, aimless career.

RAY KROC

Aimless? All I have are aims!

ETHEL KROC

This is a nightmare. My life is a nightmare. I'm stuck in an endless loop, forever starting over. Every five years, back to square one.

RAY KROC

You know what, Ethel? Go to hell!

ETHEL KROC

Too late, Ray! I'm already there!

RAY KROC

Screw you!

He storms off.

ETHEL KROC

I MARRIED SISYPHUS!

EXT. MOVIE THEATER - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc, still steaming, steps to the ticket window.

RAY KROC

One ticket, please.

INT. MOVIE THEATER - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc sits in the theater, the light of the screen flickering off his face. A sweeping orchestral score rises.

ANGLE ON screen: A title card, big and bold:

MAGNIFICENT OBSESSION

ON KROC-- staring at the words.

INT. KROC'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kroc lies on the couch, too worked up to sleep. (It's unclear if he's there by choice or he's been banished by Ethel.)

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

Kroc paces, ringing phone to his ear.

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

RAY KROC
Mac McDonald, please.

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

RAY KROC
Dick, 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.

Kroc glances at his watch, puzzled by the commotion.

RAY KROC
What time is it there?

EMPLOYEE (O.S.)
10:20.

RAY KROC
What time do you open?

EMPLOYEE (O.S.)
11.

ON KROC-- amazed. They don't even open for another 40 minutes.

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

Kroc out on a sales call to a local drive-in. He gives 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.

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

Kroc sits in his car, pulled up to a spot in front. He looks
 at his watch. Honks. A CARHOP comes roller-skating over.

CARHOP
 Sorry, should be just a few more
 minutes.

From out of nowhere...

SPLAT! A cup of KETCHUP smashes against his windshield.

ANGLE ON a nearby FOOD FIGHT, one of the young participants
 wincing at the sight of the collateral damage on Kroc's car.

FOOD FIGHTER
 Oops.

ON KROC-- staring at the ketchup glob sliding down his
 windshield. He turns on the ignition, pulls out.

CARHOP
 Sir, what about your--?

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 MAC-- reloading the Lazy Susan with a new set of bun tops.

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

Mac turns, startled to see Kroc.

MAC MCDONALD
Ray.

RAY KROC
If you boys don't want to franchise
for yourselves, fine. But do it for
your country. For America.

Dick comes over, seeing Ray.

DICK MCDONALD
Mr. Kroc. What are you--

RAY KROC
This place you've created, it's not
a restaurant. It's not even a
place. It's an idea.

Mac and Dick look at each other, intrigued. Especially Mac.

MAC MCDONALD
(to an employee)
Bobby, finish the buns.

INT. BACK OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Kroc stands before the brothers.

RAY KROC
That drive back home to Chicago on
66, I passed through a lot of
towns. A lot of small towns. In the
middle of every one of them, there
was a Main Street. And on each of
those Main Streets, there were
always the same two things: a
courthouse and a church.

(BEAT)

A courthouse topped with a flag. A
church topped with a cross. Flags
and crosses, crosses and flags.

Mac and Dick glance at each other, not quite sure where he's
going with this.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
As I drove, I pondered those
crosses and flags.
(MORE)

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

I asked myself why they're so ubiquitous. What they mean. And in doing so, I couldn't help but think about your restaurant. About these:

He goes to the wall, pulls off the blueprint with 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, either. Seven days a week.

(BEAT)

Crosses. Flags. *Arches*.

ON MAC-- wowed. He looks over at Dick, who, to his surprise, wears a troubled look on his face.

MAC MCDONALD

(to Kroc)

Would you excuse us a moment?

INT. BACK OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

The brothers, alone in the back office.

DICK MCDONALD

I don't like it.

MAC MCDONALD

What's wrong?

DICK MCDONALD

(shakes head, troubled)

There's just something about him.

MAC MCDONALD
He seems like an alright guy.

DICK MCDONALD
He's a huckster.

MAC MCDONALD
That's just the way these salesmen
talk.

DICK MCDONALD
He just seems so... desperate.

MAC MCDONALD
That's not desperation, it's
passion. Did you hear the way he
talked about McDonald's? He wants
to make us the biggest thing since
sliced bread.

Dick shakes his head again, full of nagging doubt.

DICK MCDONALD
I don't know...

MAC MCDONALD
Come on, give the fella a try.
Let's see what he can do.

He grabs Dick's shoulders, gives him a reassuring smile.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
What's the worst that could happen?

INT. LAWYER'S OFFICE - DAY

A LAWYER sits behind his big desk. Across from him are the
McDonald brothers and Kroc.

ANGLE ON five stacks of duplicate CONTRACTS arrayed before
the lawyer. He glances at his watch, looks at Kroc.

LAWYER
Will he be here soon?

RAY KROC
Who?

LAWYER
Your representation.

RAY KROC
I don't have any.

ON MAC-- surprised. He looks at his brother, who seems troubled, his worries about Kroc reinforced.

SHORT TIME LATER--

Kroc skims through the contract. *Skim* is the operative word.

He comes to the last page, where a blank line awaits his John Hancock. He grabs a pen and eagerly, readily signs.

CUT TO:

INT. ILLINOIS FIRST FEDERAL - DAY (ONE MONTH LATER)

A LOAN OFFICER sits behind his desk.

RAY KROC (O.S.)
We are a dynamic, fast-growing
company.

Across from him sits Kroc in his best suit and tie.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
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.

LOAN OFFICER
(re: arches)
What are those?

RAY KROC
Those? That's just our little way
of separating ourselves from the
pack.
(proud smile)
"The Golden Arches", I call 'em.

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

Kroc anxiously watches 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. Stares at Kroc.

LOAN OFFICER
 You look familiar.
 (BEAT)
 Have we met?

Kroc tenses up a drop.

RAY KROC
 I don't believe so.

ON LOAN OFFICER, searching Kroc's face, determined to place
 it. He snaps his fingers.

LOAN OFFICER
 The Fold-A-Nook!
 (hint of a smirk)
 "It's like a Murphy bed... for your
 kitchen!"

EXT. ILLINOIS FIRST FEDERAL - MOMENTS LATER

Kroc exits the bank in defeat.

INT. MIDWAY SAVINGS & LOAN - 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!

RAY KROC
 (forces a smile)
 Long time ago.

An awkward pause, painful for Kroc.

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 some sort of application for Kroc.

LOAN OFFICER #3

Address?

RAY KROC

143 Juniper Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois.

ANGLE ON his desk plaque: **HARVEY C. PELTZ - HOME MORTGAGE REPRESENTATIVE**

LOAN OFFICER #3

Home telephone number?

Kroc's eyes drift to the form, a home-mortgage application.

RAY KROC

Let me give you my office. That's the best place to reach me.

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - ANOTHER NIGHT

The office is empty, except for Kroc. He's at his desk, engrossed in work. The phone RINGS, startling him a bit.

RAY KROC

Hello?
(listening)
Ethel.

Kroc glances out the window, sees it's dark out.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

Listen, I don't think I'm going to be home in time for dinner.

INT. KROC'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Ethel on the other end of the line.

ETHEL KROC
Dinner?

WIDER SHOT reveals she's IN BED, in a nightgown.

ETHEL KROC (CONT'D)
It's almost midnight.

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Kroc looks at his watch, cringing. It's 11:45.

ETHEL KROC (O.S.)
(irritated)
I'm going to bed.

RAY KROC
Oh. Okay. I'll be careful not to--

Click.

INT. KROC'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - MIDDLE OF NIGHT

Ethel is asleep, alone in the too-big bed.

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Kroc is asleep on his too-small office couch. Paperwork is scattered across his chest and on the floor.

NEXT MORNING--

Kroc still on the couch, out cold. A light knock on the door.

JUNE MARTINO (O.S.)
Mr. Kroc?

June opens the door a crack. The sound stirs him.

JUNE MARTINO (CONT'D)
I'm very sorry, sir, I didn't--

RAY KROC
That's alright, June. What is it?

JUNE MARTINO
This just arrived.

She hands him a PACKAGE. He looks at it, unsure what it is. The return address is from SAN BERNARDINO.

MOMENTS LATER--

Kroc opens the package. Inside is a THICK BINDER. He flips through it. Hundreds of pages of dense, detailed instructions regarding all things McDonald's.

He slows at a section titled **CONSTRUCTION**. It's packed with BUILDING SPECS, including a folded BLUEPRINT. Kroc unfolds it. A troubled look comes over his face.

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

Mac picks up the phone, Dick a few feet away. (Intercut as necessary.)

MAC MCDONALD
("chipper")
Hiya, Ray. How's tricks?

RAY KROC
What's this about?

MAC MCDONALD
What's what about?

RAY KROC
The binder.

MAC MCDONALD
Oh, that? That's just a little
operating manual we worked up.
Thought it might be helpful to you.

Mac glances at Dick, who's listening in with concern.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
There a problem?

RAY KROC
Quite a few, actually.

MAC MCDONALD
Oh? Such as?

RAY KROC
Well, for starters, the blueprint.
(reading)
*Must build to exact specifications.
No variations permitted.*

MAC MCDONALD

Nothing personal, Ray. It's just, what with everything we've been through with the other franchises.

RAY KROC

You can't actually expect me to use this.

MAC MCDONALD

Why not?

RAY KROC

There's no basement. No furnace.

MAC MCDONALD

So?

RAY KROC

Have you been to Chicago in the wintertime?

MAC MCDONALD

Look, if you'd like to propose an amendment to the design, just submit a request in writing, and we'll be happy to--

RAY KROC

In writing?

MAC MCDONALD

Please. Yes.

RAY KROC

What's wrong with the telephone?

MAC MCDONALD

That's just how we'd prefer to do it.

RAY KROC

That'll set me back weeks. Months.

MAC MCDONALD

As I said, it's nothing personal.

RAY KROC

I'm sorry, I don't understand why I can't just--

MAC MCDONALD

That's how we'd like to do it.

Mac glances at Dick, who nods in support/approval. We get the impression this was at his insistence.

RAY KROC
That's silly.

MAC MCDONALD
Maybe so, but those are the terms you agreed to. Any changes must be officially approved by Dick and myself in writing.

ON KROC-- bewildered.

RAY KROC
When the hell did I agree to that?

SHORT TIME LATER--

Kroc sits at his desk, combing through a copy of the contract he signed in California. Sure enough:

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

RAY KROC (PRE-LAP)
I've been hoodwinked!

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - SHORT TIME LATER

June Martino stands in the middle of Kroc's office.

RAY KROC
Talk about a sneaky, underhanded move.

ON KROC-- pacing the floor.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
They buried the lead. Slipped it into the fine print.

June just nods helplessly, sympathetically.

INT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - ANOTHER DAY

A hard-hatted Kroc stands in a dirt lot, watching workers lay a building foundation. A nearby sign proclaims **COMING SOON - MCDONALD'S FAMOUS HAMBURGERS!**

June comes over with a letter, hands it to Kroc. His eyes go to the San Bernardino return address, hands it back to her.

RAY KROC

Read it.

She opens the letter, reluctantly begins to read:

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-- nodding, surprised and heartened.

JUNE MARTINO (CONT'D)

However...

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - SHORT TIME LATER

A frustrated-as-hell Kroc is on the phone.

RAY KROC

Small. At the bottom.

INT. MCDONALD'S - SAN BERNARDINO - CONTINUOUS

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

RAY KROC (O.S.)

Very discrete.

MAC MCDONALD

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

RAY KROC

Coca-Cola's already on the menu. What's the difference if there's another little--

MAC MCDONALD

I'm sorry, Ray.

ON KROC-- shut down.

RAY KROC
You couldn't have told me that five
goddamn weeks ago?

He slams down the phone.

MOMENTS LATER--

Mac and Dick, post-call. Dick shakes his head darkly.

DICK MCDONALD
The guy's trouble. He's a loose
cannon.

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

DICK MCDONALD
We never should have let him in.

MAC MCDONALD
Will you relax? Everything's fine.

We get the sense he's telling himself this as much as Dick.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
He's powerless. The contract
protects us fully.

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

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

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

INT. MCDONALDS (DES PLAINES) - KITCHEN - DAY

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

TRACKING SHOT, high-energy, as Kroc marches through the
restaurant 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.

ON GRILLER #1, flipping a patty--

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Wrist! More wrist!

Kroc grabs the spatula, demonstrates proper technique. He moves onto GRILLER #2, moving a patty off the grill--

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Too fast--it's still pink!

He moves 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.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Good.

ON KROC-- taking in the eager young buck, who looks maybe 22.

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. Thank you, 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 - BEDROOM - MIDNIGHT

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

As he unbuttons his shirt, he hears a sound... a SNIFFLE. He looks at Ethel, sees she's actually awake. His eyes go to her pillow. It's stained with tears.

He goes over, sits down on the bed next to her. He looks at her, feeling genuinely bad.

RAY KROC

I'm sorry.

He takes in her hurt face. Her cheeks damp with tears.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

I know I've neglected you.

He looks her in the eye, contrite.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

I'm going to give you more time. I promise.

(BEAT)

Tomorrow night. Let's have supper at the club.

She looks up at him, surprised, heartened.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

It's been way too long.

He sweetly 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, in a red Rolling Green C.C. sport coat, leads Ethel to a big round table. At it are fellow CLUB MEMBERS, who warmly greet the Krocs. One of the men gives Ray a hearty hug.

CLUB MEMBER

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.

ON 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

But I did recently hit a hole-in-one of a different sort.

He smiles cryptically. The men look at each other, intrigued.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

Anybody interested in hearing about an exciting investment opportunity?

Kroc sneaks a glance at Ethel, who's immersed in the ladies' conversation, oblivious to Ray's machinations.

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 featuring McDonald's mascot Speedee, who says in a word bubble: "**HOWDY, SCHAUMBURG! McDONALD'S IS ON THE WAY!**"

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

--Kroc playing a round of golf at the club, giving his golf mates the McDonald's 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 the brand-new Schaumburg store. There's a line out front, not spectacular but solid.

He parks, heads toward the restaurant with a spring in his step. He abruptly slows, noticing something:

ANGLE ON a CUSTOMER in his car, biting into a hamburger. Sticking out the sides of the burger is a piece of LETTUCE.

ON KROC-- stunned, appalled.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Kroc enters the kitchen.

RAY KROC

Jack?

He looks around, doesn't see Horford. Kroc goes over to the dressing station, where, in addition to the standard fixings, there's a tray of lettuce.

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.

Horford sees he's holding something. A hamburger. Kroc gets right up in his face waving the burger.

RAY KROC
What is this?

Horford stares at the burger, bewildered.

JACK HORFORD
It appears to be a hamburger.

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

He lifts off the bun, pointing out the many deficiencies--

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

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

RAY KROC
And the patty.
(tears open the meat)
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.

He impulsively grabs it, takes a big bite.

JERRY CULLEN (CONT'D)

Delicious.

Kroc stares at Cullen with deep suspicion. *Et tu, Jerry?*

EXT. MCDONALD'S (JERRY CULLEN'S) - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc marches through the parking lot toward Cullen's McDonald's. On the way, he's met with the disturbing sight of a WOMAN in her car--eating a HOT DOG.

Kroc looks at the menu, stunned to see **HOT DOG** listed. Scanning, he spots **FRIED CHICKEN** and **CORN ON THE COB**, too.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Kroc looks around the kitchen, scanning for offenses. He quickly spots plenty--

An overflowing trash can. An open freezer door. And, for the capper, a USED TISSUE on the Lazy Susan. He watches in horror as the BUN DRESSER grabs it, wiping his red, drippy nose.

Kroc looks to the wall. Hanging there is a framed headshot of a smiling Jerry Cullen. A plaque at the bottom says **JERRY CULLEN - OWNER/OPERATOR**.

INT. ROLLING GREEN - CLUBHOUSE - SHORT TIME LATER

The golf foursome are enjoying some post-golf cocktails at the clubhouse, called "The 19th Hole".

JERRY CULLEN

If you're a six handicap, I'm
Lawrence of Arabia!

Roaring laughs. They're all a bit drunk, having a great time. Jack Horford looks up toward the door. His face falls--

JACK HORFORD

Oh, boy. Here we go.

ANGLE ON Kroc storming into the clubhouse, loaded for bear. He makes a beeline for Cullen.

RAY KROC

What the hell kind of two-bit
operation you running, Cullen?

JERRY CULLEN

Hello, Ray.

RAY KROC
Fried chicken?

JERRY CULLEN
People love fried chicken.

RAY KROC
And the filth. It looked like some
sort of Manchurian slum.

JERRY CULLEN
With great chicken.

Everybody laughs. Kroc is not amused.

RAY KROC
(to Jack, Jerry)
Are you aware what goes on at your
restaurants? Do you even care?

Cullen and Horford look at each other, then back at Ray.

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

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

JERRY CULLEN
(nods in agreement)
If I wanted a job, I'd have applied
for a cook position.

ON KROC-- silently stewing.

INT. KROC'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - EVENING

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 some kind of
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)
(determined gaze)
Far more suitable.

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

Kroc is at work at his desk. The intercom buzzes.

JUNE MARTINO (O.S.)
Mac McDonald for you.

Kroc lets out a small, pained groan. He picks up.

RAY KROC
 (fake-friendly)
 Mac!

INT. SAN BERNARDINO MCDONALD'S - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

MAC MCDONALD
 (equally fake-friendly)
 Hiya, Ray!

(Intercut as necessary.)

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
 Just thought I'd check in, see how
 it's going with the new franchises.

RAY KROC
 Oh, fine. Swell.

MAC MCDONALD
 Wonderful. Delighted to hear it.
 So your operators are panning out?

RAY KROC
 Swimmingly. We're off to a flying
 start here in Chicagoland.

A blast of hellacious DIARRHEA. We hard-cut on the sound to--

INT. MEN'S ROOM - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc on the office toilet taking an angry, nervous dump.

INT. FRONT DESK - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc walks toward the front desk with the men's room key.

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

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

SALESMAN (CONT'D)
 You're telling me such marvelous
 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 with interest.

SALESMAN (CONT'D)

As I'm sure you know, June, envy is
one of the seven cardinal 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--

RAY KROC

What's your name, son?

The salesman turns to Kroc.

SALESMAN

Leonard. Leonard Rosenblatt.

RAY KROC

Rosenblatt?

Ray stares at him, curiosity piqued.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

What's a Jew doing selling Catholic
Bibles?

LEONARD ROSENBLATT

(blunt, 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 type of fellow I need.*

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - DAY

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

Leonard looks at the contract. At his wife.

ON LEONARD AND MYRA ROSENBLATT-- looking at each other,
excited, hopeful, nervous.

A young couple, staking everything on a shared dream. Myra gives her husband's hand a loving, supportive squeeze.

MYRA ROSENBLATT

I believe in you.

LEONARD ROSENBLATT

Us.

ON KROC-- watching the interaction with admiration--and more than 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' franchises were not.

ON KROC-- standing in the middle, observing various workers, pleased and impressed by everything he sees.

LEONARD ROSENBLATT (O.S.)

Let's go, chop-chop!

KROC'S POV: Rosenblatt moving about the kitchen, barking out orders, making sure everything's just so. The mirror image of Kroc at his Des Plaines store.

MYRA ROSENBLATT (O.S.)

Here you go, sport...

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 10 and under, but I'll make an exception.

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

INT. KROC'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - THAT NIGHT

Kroc is getting undressed for bed, buzzing.

RAY KROC
You should've seen this place.

ON ETHEL-- in bed, her eyelids growing heavy.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
And those *owners*. You've never seen
a pair of dynamos like these two.
He's in back, running the kitchen,
she's up front, passing out suckers
to the kiddies. Like a *team*.
(no reply)
It's wonderful.

Kroc looks at Ethel, irked to see her drifting off.

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

ETHEL KROC
Think what?

RAY KROC
That it's wonderful.
(touch loaded)
Two people, side by side, working
together.

ETHEL KROC
It's wonderful.

RAY KROC
You say that with such sincerity.

ETHEL KROC
It mean it. It's wonderful.
(singing, sarcastic)
S'wonderful... s'marvelous...

A stretch of edgy silence as he pulls off his socks.

RAY KROC
I made us supper plans for Friday
night.

ETHEL KROC
I don't suppose you rejoined the
club.

RAY KROC
Someplace much better.

ETHEL KROC
Oh, goody. I'll polish my diamonds.

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--the average age is 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. Ethel's neck and hands are conspicuously jewelry-free.

As Ethel picks listlessly at her meatloaf, Kroc chats up the COUPLE (mid-20s) next to them.

RAY KROC
So Art, what do you do for a living?

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 I 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 totally fit the profile.

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

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - SHORT TIME LATER

Art Wolodarsky signing up for a franchise, wife by his side.

CUT TO:

RECRUITMENT MONTAGE:

Kroc hunting for new recruits for the McDonald's Army.

RAY KROC
I'm looking for a few good men!

A fired-up Kroc speaking at an AMERICAN LEGION HALL:

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Men willing to roll up their
sleeves!

At a SYNAGOGUE:

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Men with fire in their bellies!

At an AMWAY MEETING:

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Hustlers! Scrappers! Grinders!

More SNIPPETS of speeches to potential franchise owners.
Mechanics and schoolteachers, immigrants and outsiders.

"With hard work and sacrifice..."

"With gumption and elbow grease..."

"This is your opportunity to climb the ladder of success!"

"...the brass ring!"

"...the American Dream!"

Over and over, he invokes the same word: FAMILY.

"When you join the McDonald's family..."

"McDonald's is a family business. By families, for families."

"Our core family values..."

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 parking lot after dark. Relentless, inexhaustible.

END OF MONTAGE

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - DAY

Kroc stands before a U.S. MAP tacked to the wall. Half a dozen pins are clustered around the Illinois-Wisconsin area.

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 little problem.

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - DAY

Kroc at his desk with June. Spread out before them is the company's financial ledger.

RAY KROC

How could we be out of working capital?

JUNE MARTINO

Well...

She runs a finger down a column of figures in the ledger.

JUNE MARTINO (CONT'D)

There's your monthly gross revenue.

Kroc takes in the figures with dismay.

RAY KROC

That's it?

JUNE MARTINO

(nods)

1.4.

RAY KROC
 (not following)
 1.4...?

JUNE MARTINO
 Percent. Of franchisee profits.

MOMENTS LATER--

June is flipping through Kroc's contract with the brothers. She finds the page she's looking for, plants a finger on a section in the middle. Amidst a sea of legalese--

...SHALL RECEIVE ONE AND FOUR-TENTHS PERCENT (1.4%) OF NET PROFITS GENERATED BY...

June looks at Kroc staring at it, surprised by his apparent surprise.

JUNE MARTINO
 (treading lightly)
 You never...?

RAY KROC
 Of course I've read it!

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

Mac 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?

Mac turns, sees a YOUNG EMPLOYEE.

EMPLOYEE (CONT'D)
 There's a call for you.

MAC MCDONALD
 Who?

EMPLOYEE
 A Mr. Koch, Krotch?
 (BEAT)
 He says it's urgent.

INT. BACK OFFICE - SHORT TIME LATER

The brothers are at their respective desks. They each pick up a phone, bracing for it.

MAC MCDONALD
Hiya, Ray!

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

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

RAY KROC
I want to renegotiate.

MAC MCDONALD
Renegotiate what?

RAY KROC
My deal. My lousy deal.

MAC MCDONALD
I'm sorry, I don't quite...

RAY KROC
1.4?

The brothers look at each other with alarm.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
What the hell kind of cut is that?

MAC MCDONALD
Ray...

RAY KROC
That's scarcely enough to cover my
basic monthly overhead, much less
drive expansion.

MAC MCDONALD
I don't understand.

RAY KROC
You boys have got me working with
both hands tied behind my back.

MAC MCDONALD
Are you just now looking at your
contract for the first--

RAY KROC
You've set me up to fail.

MAC MCDONALD
That's the cut you agreed to.
Freely and willingly.

RAY KROC

What I *agreed to* was to do everything in my power to make McDonald's a smashing national success. And I assumed, perhaps naively, that you'd be an ally in that effort and not an impediment.

MAC MCDONALD

Nobody's being an impediment.

RAY KROC

Then renegotiate my deal.

Mac glances at Dick.

MAC MCDONALD

We can't do that.

RAY KROC

Five percent.

MAC MCDONALD

I'm sorry.

RAY KROC

Four and a half.

MAC MCDONALD

I'm sorry, Ray.

RAY KROC

Goddammit!
(flings contract)
You took advantage of me!

MAC MCDONALD

That's not true.

RAY KROC

It is. You exploited my trusting nature.

MAC MCDONALD

In case you forgot, Ray, you pushed for a deal. Not us. You're the one who wanted it. Badly.

RAY KROC

Because I just wanted to help you. I wanted to help make McDonald's everything it could possibly be.

(MORE)

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

And that's just what I've been doing, every day, busting my hump trying to help you reach your dream of making McDonald's the biggest and the best.

A BEAT of silence from Mac, possibly telling.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

That *is* your dream, right?

MAC MCDONALD

(measured)

We want it to be the best.

RAY KROC

I said the biggest and the best.

MAC MCDONALD

(sighs)

Look.

RAY KROC

What?

MAC MCDONALD

We've got a great thing going here in San Bernardino. We have a thriving business that produces a quality product. That people love.

RAY KROC

What are you trying to say?

MAC MCDONALD

I'm trying to say...

(BEAT)

We're happy. We're content.

The words burn Kroc's ears like acid.

RAY KROC

Content.

MAC MCDONALD

Content.

RAY KROC

With one location.

MAC MCDONALD

Or three. Or seven.

RAY KROC

Or 900?

Mac chortles/gasps at the figure.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

2,000?

MAC MCDONALD

Ray.

RAY KROC

2,000. Sounds good. Nice round number.

MAC MCDONALD

I think we're getting a little ahead of ourselves.

RAY KROC

Do you want to be big?

MAC MCDONALD

I mean, sure, but...

RAY KROC

But what?

MAC MCDONALD

That's never been the primary goal.

RAY KROC

What happened to coast to coast, sea to shining sea?

MAC MCDONALD

Those were your words.

RAY KROC

Words you loved.

MAC MCDONALD

Words I liked. They sounded real good at the time.

RAY KROC

But now?

(angry)

How do they sound now, Mac?

ON MAC-- looking helplessly at his brother.

SHORT TIME LATER--

Mac and Dick sit at their desks in gloomy post-call silence.

DICK MCDONALD
So Neville, how'd it go in Munich?

No reply from Mac. Dick waves an imaginary Anglo-German Agreement Of 1938.

DICK MCDONALD (CONT'D)
(British accent)
"Peace in our time!"

Mac rolls his eyes, unamused.

MAC MCDONALD
Relax.

DICK MCDONALD
When are you going to face reality?

MAC MCDONALD
Which is?

DICK MCDONALD
There's a wolf in the henhouse!

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 actual harm.

DICK MCDONALD
If you say so.

MAC MCDONALD
I don't, the contract does.

We notice a light sheen of sweat forming on Mac's forehead.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
He's powerless. Any and all changes have to be...

Mac unexpectedly trails off, losing his train of thought.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)
Any and all...

ON DICK-- seeing something is off with his brother.

DICK MCDONALD

Mac?

Mac loosens his tie a little. His face grows flushed.

DICK MCDONALD (CONT'D)

You alright?

Mac looks woozy, lightheaded.

MAC MCDONALD

It's not fair.

DICK MCDONALD

Mac...

MAC MCDONALD

When are you gonna let me walk the dog, Dickie?

DICK MCDONALD

I think you're having one of your--

THUNK. Mac flops over, CRASHING TO THE FLOOR.

Dick rushes to Mac's desk, opens the bottom drawer. He takes out a small red box that says **GLUCAGON EMERGENCY KIT**.

SAN BERNARDINO - KITCHEN - SHORT TIME LATER

Mac is sitting on the floor, nursing a McDonald's milkshake.

DICK MCDONALD

A few more sips.

Dick takes a sip of the shake. His sleeves are rolled up, exposing a MEDIC ALERT BRACELET. Engraved on it is **DIABETES TYPE 2**.

MAC MCDONALD

I'm okay.

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

ON MAC-- gazing off darkly at something.

MAC MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Everything's okay.

MAC'S POV: He's looking at the Multimixer on the counter.

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

Kroc is restlessly pacing in the kitchen.

RAY KROC

Content.

The angry crackle of sizzling meat fills the air. It sounds like his brain.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

They're content!

REVEAL who he's speaking to: Young griller Fred Turner, listening as he flips patties.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

Do you know what contentment is, Fred?

FRED TURNER

No, sir.

RAY KROC

Contentment is merely laziness in disguise.

Turner ponders this earnestly, an impressionable young man.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

And do you know what laziness is?

FRED TURNER

I don't, sir.

RAY KROC

It's fear. Of success. Of sacrifice. Of doing the necessary hard work.

Turner nods thoughtfully.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

McDonald's could be the biggest thing going. But those two yokels out there in the desert can't see past their own front porch. They're a couple of field mice, afraid of their own shadows.

(shakes head)

I can't stand small-mindedness.

His gaze drifts downward to his WEDDING RING for a moment.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Ambition. That's the stuff of life!

ON TURNER-- inspired, really connecting with this.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Those boys have no clue what they've got on their hands. They struck gold and decided to open a copper mine.

Turner nods sympathetically. Shakes his head.

FRED TURNER
They don't deserve this company.

ON KROC-- struck by Turner's offhand comment. A seed is planted.

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - EVENING

Kroc sits at his desk. Staring up at him is a mountain of BILLS AND INVOICES. Among them are numerous PAST-DUE NOTICES.

Kroc stares at them, overwhelmed. He picks one up, somewhat at random. A bill from Chicago Gas & Electric. He opens it.

ON KROC-- taking in the amount, appalled.

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

INT. WALK-IN COOLER - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc is in the Des Plaines store's huge WALK-IN COOLER.

FRED TURNER
You wouldn't believe what it costs to power one of these suckers.

Kroc looks at the electric bill in his hand, shakes his head.

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 one side of the cooler. The entire thing is filled with drums of ice cream for the milkshakes.

ON KROC-- staring contemplatively at the drums.

CASHIER (O.S.)
Mr. Kroc?

Standing in the cooler doorway is a young CASHIER.

CASHIER (CONT'D)
We're all out of singles.

BACK OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Kroc is bent over the office safe. He enters the combination, opens it. He takes out a pack of singles, \$50 in ones.

REGISTER - MOMENTS LATER

Kroc brings the singles to the register, sticks them in the drawer. The cashier grabs three, hands them to a customer.

CASHIER
Here's your change, sir. I'm very
sorry about the wait.

ANGLE ON the customer, a white-haired gentleman (50s) in an expensive suit. He has a polished, cosmopolitan air about him. As we will later learn, this is HARRY SONNEBORN.

HARRY SONNEBORN
No worries at all. For a burger
like this, I've got all day.

RAY KROC
(smiles)
We aim to please.

Sonneborn looks Kroc over, sizing him up as the owner.

HARRY SONNEBORN
This your place?

RAY KROC
It is.

ON SONNEBORN-- looking around, taking in the thriving operation. He seems like he's thinking. He gives Kroc a small, slightly enigmatic nod of approval and WALKS OFF.

ON KROC-- watching him go, mildly amused/intrigued.

INT. PRINCE CASTLE SALES - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc returns to his office. He drops the electric bill on top of the bill stack on his desk. As he does, June enters the room with a fresh batch of mail. She hands it to him.

ON KROC-- sifting through the new mail. More bills, including one from MIDWAY SAVINGS & LOAN stamped "PAST DUE".

He stares at the letter. A look of physical discomfort comes over him.

INT. OFFICE - MEN'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Kroc on the toilet, shitting his anxious guts out.

He grabs a magazine off the rack. An industry trade publication, **RESTAURANT BUSINESS MONTHLY**. He idly flips through it. As he does, something catches his eye.

ANGLE ON a full-page ad. For something called INSTAMIX. A powdered milkshake mix. The ad copy trumpets--

**ATTENTION OWNER-OPERATORS: INTRODUCING INSTAMIX, 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!**

ON KROC-- staring at the ad, wheels turning.

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - ANOTHER DAY

Kroc at his desk on the phone.

RAY KROC
I want to run something by you.

INT. SAN BERNARDINO - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Mac is on the other end, Dick listening in on the second line. (Intercut as necessary.)

RAY KROC
(his old salesman's flair)
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?

MAC MCDONALD

Well...

RAY KROC

And free up valuable storage space.
And reduce the amount of time it
takes to make a milkshake by half.

MAC MCDONALD

I'll bite. What is it?

RAY KROC

Ready? It's called...
("drum roll")
Instamix.

Mac looks over at Dick.

MAC MCDONALD

Instamix.

Kroc grabs a SILVER-FOIL PACKET off his desk.

RAY KROC

It's a powdered milkshake. Costs a
fraction of ice cream, no
refrigeration necessary.

MAC MCDONALD

Powdered?

RAY KROC

Thickening agents and emulsifiers
simulate the texture of milkfat.
Tastes just like the real thing.

MAC MCDONALD

Ray...

RAY KROC

Comes in vanilla and chocolate.

MAC MCDONALD

Ray...

RAY KROC

And it's easy as pie to prepare.
Just stir the packet contents into
eight ounces of water and stir.

We see, on his desk, a sample VANILLA SHAKE that he's made.

MAC MCDONALD

Do you hear yourself? Do you hear what you're saying?

RAY KROC

I really think it's a crackerjack idea.

MAC MCDONALD

Absolutely not.

RAY KROC

Why?

MAC MCDONALD

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

RAY KROC

At least give a try. I'm telling you, you'll never be able to tell the--

MAC MCDONALD

A powdered shake flies in the face of everything McDonald's stands for.

RAY KROC

Which is?

MAC MCDONALD

Freshness. Quality.

RAY KROC

Value.

MAC MCDONALD

A McDonald's milkshake is made from 100 percent real milk.

RAY KROC

You don't want to save a bundle? I know I sure wouldn't mind boosting my bottom--

MAC MCDONALD

Milk. Milk. Now and forever.

ON KROC-- shut down.

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

Kroc enters the house, still steaming from the call with the brothers. He hangs up his coat and makes a beeline for the liquor cabinet, pours himself a stiff drink. As he gulps it down, he's startled to see... Ethel, sitting in a recliner in a corner of the darkened room.

RAY KROC

Ethel.

She glares at him in stony silence, even stonier than usual.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

What are you doing up?

ETHEL KROC

A man called today.

RAY KROC

Oh?

ETHEL KROC

From a bank.

RAY KROC

(nervous)

Alright...

ETHEL KROC

Midway Savings & Loan.

RAY KROC

What'd they want?

ETHEL KROC

You don't know?

RAY KROC

Of course not.

(BEAT)

Why would I?

She gives a slow, unnerving nod.

ETHEL KROC

Ray?

RAY KROC

Yes, Ethel?

ETHEL KROC

Did you mortgage our home?

ON KROC-- a deer in the headlights.

RAY KROC

What?

LIVING ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Kroc banished to the living-room couch. He tosses and turns, trying to get comfortable. He rolls over, revealing a NASTY WELT on his temple.

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - NEXT DAY

Kroc is on the phone. The welt is covered with a bandage.

RAY KROC

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

INT. MIDWAY SAVINGS & LOAN - CONTINUOUS

On the other end is Harvey C. Peltz, his home-mortgage officer. (Intercut as necessary.)

LOAN OFFICER

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

RAY KROC

You have no right to call me at my
home. It's a blatant invasion of
privacy.

LOAN OFFICER

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.

SHORT TIME LATER--

Kroc sits his desk staring at the ever-growing pile of bills. The intercom buzzes.

JUNE MARTINO (O.S.)

Sir?

RAY KROC

Yes, June.

JUNE MARTINO (O.S.)
 There's a Harry Sonneborn here to
 see you.

RAY KROC
 Who?

JUNE MARTINO (O.S.)
 He says you don't know him.

RAY KROC
 Is he with the bank?

JUNE MARTINO (O.S.)
 No, sir.

RAY KROC
 Then who's he with?

JUNE MARTINO (O.S.)
 (BEAT, asking Sonneborn)
 Illinois Beef.

RAY KROC
 The meat company?

JUNE MARTINO (O.S.)
 Yes.

RAY KROC
 Tell him no thanks, we already have
 a supplier.

HARRY SONNEBORN (O.S.)
 (commandeers intercom,
 booming baritone)
 Just let me talk to you already!

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Settling into a chair is Harry Sonneborn, the patrician
 gentleman who we (and Kroc, vaguely) recognize from their
 exchange at the Des Plaines McDonald's a few days earlier.

HARRY SONNEBORN
 So McDonald's.

RAY KROC
 You're wasting your time. We're
 perfectly satisfied with our
 current supplier.

HARRY SONNEBORN
I'm not looking to sell you meat.
I'm looking to work for you.

RAY KROC
I beg your pardon?

HARRY SONNEBORN
I've been keeping an eye on your
company for some time, and I must
say I'm extremely impressed. I see
a bright future for McDonald's--and
I want to be a part of it.

RAY KROC
I'm flattered. Really and truly.
But I'm unfortunately not in any
position to hire you.

HARRY SONNEBORN
You lack the authority?

RAY KROC
I lack the money.

ON SONNEBORN-- nodding, absorbing.

HARRY SONNEBORN
Then you definitely need to hire
me.

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

**HARRY J. SONNEBORN - VICE-PRESIDENT OF FINANCES - THE
ILLINOIS BEEF COMPANY**

HARRY SONNEBORN (CONT'D)
I want \$100 a week.

Kroc looks up, taken aback.

RAY KROC
My secretary gets more.

HARRY SONNEBORN
That's alright. You'll give me a
big raise when I turn this ship
around.

ON KROC-- blown away by this man's confidence and audacity.

HARRY SONNEBORN (CONT'D)
Now say yes and show me your books.

SHORT TIME LATER--

Kroc and Sonneborn sit in front of the ledger, poring over it, Sonneborn asking questions.

SHORT TIME LATER--

Kroc closes the ledger.

HARRY SONNEBORN

So to summarize, you've got a negligible revenue stream, no cash reserves, and an albatross of a contract that gives you no autonomy and requires you to go through a maddeningly slow approval process to enact any changes--if approved at all. Am I missing anything?

RAY KROC

I believe that covers it.

ON SONNEBORN-- processing for a BEAT.

HARRY SONNEBORN

Tell me about the land.

RAY KROC

The land?

HARRY SONNEBORN

The land, the buildings. How that whole side of it works.

RAY KROC

It's pretty simple, really. The franchise operator finds a piece of land he likes, takes out a lease, usually a 20-year. Then he gets a construction loan, puts up the building, and off he goes.

HARRY SONNEBORN

So the franchisee picks the location. He selects the property.

Kroc nods.

HARRY SONNEBORN (CONT'D)

You're not involved? You have no say?

RAY KROC
Why would I?

HARRY SONNEBORN
So you supply the training, the system, the operational know-how, and he's responsible for the rest.

Kroc nods, unsure why he's so interested in all of this.

ON SONNEBORN-- nodding, processing. He seems bothered.

RAY KROC
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. You're not in the burger business... You're in the real-estate business.

ON KROC-- confused.

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

Kroc seems intrigued, interested to hear more.

HARRY SONNEBORN (CONT'D)
What you ought to be doing is buying up plots of land and then turning around and leasing them to franchisees, who as a condition of their deal should be permitted to lease from you and you only. This will provide you with two things: First, a steady, upfront revenue stream. Money flows in before the first stake is in the ground. And second, greater capital for expansion. Which in turn will fuel further land acquisition, which in turn will fuel further expansion. And so on and so on and so on.

ON KROC-- listening with his jaw on the floor. This guy is a financial genius.

HARRY SONNEBORN (CONT'D)
 This model not only gives you money but something I suspect you crave even more... control. Control over the franchisee: Fail to uphold quality standards, we cancel your lease. And even more important, control over Dick and Mac McDonald: Their power stops at the building's foundation; yours goes all the way to the soil.

An evangelical smile spreads across Sonneborn's face.

HARRY SONNEBORN (CONT'D)
Land. That's where the money is. And the power. He who controls the land controls the company.

ON KROC-- thunderstruck. It's the most brilliant thing he's ever heard, the answer to all his problems.

HARRY SONNEBORN (CONT'D)
 Any questions?

RAY KROC
 Just one.

HARRY SONNEBORN
 Yes?

RAY KROC
 Where am I going to get the money?

HARRY SONNEBORN
 To buy land?

Kroc nods.

HARRY SONNEBORN (CONT'D)
 (confident smile)
 Leave that to me.

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 full 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 pins. 10, 20, 30...

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

--New franchisees combing through hundred-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.

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

The restaurant isn't open yet. Dick is going through a stack of mail. He opens a letter, puzzled by what he sees.

KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Mac is kneeling in front of the grill, making some adjustment to the knobs. Dick comes over with the letter.

DICK MCDONALD
Have you heard of the Franchise
Realty Corporation?

MAC MCDONALD
No. What is it?

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

He hands the letter to Mac.

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. But it's really 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. Behind her, WORKMEN are taking down the old Prince Castle Sales sign and putting up a new one in its place: **FRANCHISE REALTY CORPORATION**

The phone rings. Through it, we hear Mac McDonald.

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

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

RAY KROC

Mac! How are ya?

MAC MCDONALD

Well, if you really want to know, Ray, I'm a little bit miffed.

RAY KROC

I'm sorry to hear that. What seems to be the trouble?

MAC MCDONALD

Franchise Realty Corporation.

RAY KROC

What about it?

MAC MCDONALD

Well, for starters, would you care to tell me what it is?

RAY KROC

Oh, it's nothing, really. Just a little something I created to help provide leasing services and support to new franchisees.

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

MAC MCDONALD

You know full well you can't do something like that without clearing it with us.

RAY KROC
Why would I need to do that?

MAC MCDONALD
Why? Because as your contract plainly states, all changes must be—

RAY KROC
It's not a change.

MAC MCDONALD
Excuse me?

RAY KROC
It's a *company*.

ON MAC-- confused, alarmed.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Its own separate company. Which puts it outside your purview.

MAC MCDONALD
Anything relating to McDonald's is within my and my brother's--

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

ON MAC-- caught without a response.

ON DICK-- standing in the doorway listening, angry and disgusted with his brother for leading them down this path.

Mac can't bear to look his brother in the eye. He knows he fucked up.

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, his 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 proclaiming **MINNESOTA IS MCDONALD'S COUNTRY!** They step out of the cab.

JIM ZIEN (O.S.)

Welcome!

JIM ZIEN, the burly, gregarious owner, comes out to greet them. With a showman's flourish, he gestures to a pair of HIGH-SCHOOL CHEERLEADERS dressed 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 at the red-carpet reception.

INT. MCDONALD'S - SHORT TIME LATER

Zien is leading Kroc and Turner on a tour of the kitchen. It's spotless, immaculately run. Everyone is on their best behavior, well aware of the VIP in their midst.

JIM ZIEN

This should all look familiar.

They slow at the grill, where a YOUNG EMPLOYEE is laying out the first patties of the day. He pauses to greet Kroc.

GRILLER

Welcome, Mr. Kroc.

(admiring handshake)

It's an honor to meet you.

Kroc can't help but see in this eager young buck another Fred Turner. Speaking of whom--

FRED TURNER

(shakes griller's hand)

Fred Turner. Director of Operations.

GRILLER
Bobby Petrillo.

JIM ZIEN
Bobby here is our top griller.

Kroc takes a moment to admire Bobby's handiwork. Rows of patties lined up with Fred Turner-like precision.

RAY KROC
(to Bobby, re: Turner)
Keep it up, this could be you in a few years.

ON BOBBY-- thrilled by the prospect. Getting back to work, he reaches for another patty, but then he STOPS HIMSELF. He heads for the nearby SINK, washes his hands.

BOBBY PETRILLO
(to Kroc, smile)
Not that your hands would be dirty.

Everyone enjoys a good laugh over this--especially Kroc.

FRONT COUNTER - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc, with Zien, watches as a cashier rings up a customer. A big line is forming as lunch hour approaches.

RAY KROC
How have sales been?

JIM ZIEN
Oh, pretty good...

Kroc detects a bit of hesitation in his voice.

JIM ZIEN (CONT'D)
We came out of the gate like gangbusters, but lately...

RAY KROC
What?

JIM ZIEN
Well, profits have leveled off a bit.

Kroc glances at the long line of customers outside.

RAY KROC
You seem to be doing just fine.

JIM ZIEN
 Customers aren't the trouble. It's
 expenses.

ON KROC-- interested to hear more.

WALK-IN COOLER - SHORT TIME LATER

Zien leads Kroc into the big walk-in cooler. One whole side
 is filled with drums of ice cream for the milkshakes. Just
 like we saw in Des Plaines. Zien shakes his head.

JIM ZIEN
 You can't imagine the electric
 bill. Half my money goes to
 Minnesota Gas & Power.

Kroc nods, all too familiar.

RAY KROC
 Oh, I could imagine.

Kroc's eyes go to the wall of ice cream. He stares at the
 drums, antagonized by the sight of them. They make him think
 of the brothers.

INT. ROLLIE'S - NIGHT

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

FRED TURNER
 And a baked potato.

WAITER
 Very good.
 (turns to Kroc)
 And for you, sir?

RAY KROC
 How's the rib eye?

JIM ZIEN
 (interjects)
 Best in the Twin Cities.

RAY KROC
 Sounds good. Medium rare.

JIM ZIEN
 And a couple sides of creamed
 spinach for the table.

SHORT TIME LATER--

Kroc is tucking into his 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.

ON ZIEN-- seeing an opening.

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

With this, Zien throws up a hand, waving at someone from
across the room. A man promptly comes over.

MAN
(chummy back-pat)
Jimmy, good to see ya!

We get the distinct sense this was all pre-arranged.

MAN (CONT'D)
(re: food)
Everything alright tonight?

JIM ZIEN
Wonderful as always, Rollie.

This is ROLLIE SMITH, the owner. His eyes go to Kroc.

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

Smith enthusiastically shakes his hand. (Turner is ignored.)

RAY KROC
You've got a bang-up restaurant
here.

ROLLIE SMITH
Takes one to know one.

RAY KROC
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--

The waiter is clearing everyone's finished plates. Smith is still there. He refills Kroc's wine glass.

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.
("oh, hey")
In fact, I'd say there's sufficient
enthusiasm to support another.

RAY KROC
A second location?

ROLLIE SMITH
Absolutely. And come to think of
it, I can think of somebody who'd
be perfect to own and operate.

RAY KROC
(gamely playing along)
Oh?

ROLLIE SMITH
Somebody who knows what it takes to
build a great restaurant. A man
with more than 25 years of hands-on
experience in the food business.

RAY KROC
Who?

ROLLIE SMITH
Me!

RAY KROC
("surprised")
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.

As Smith makes his case, a PIANO is heard in the background. Light and lovely tinkling.

ROLLIE SMITH (CONT'D)
Now obviously, where a restaurant goes is your call. But I'd be remiss if I didn't call to your attention a piece of real estate I happen to know is available.

ON KROC-- distracted, looking toward the piano.

ROLLIE SMITH (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Are you familiar with Hennepin Avenue?
(no reply)
It's one of the busiest commercial thoroughfares in the entire Twin...

He trails off, noticing Kroc is not listening.

ROLLIE SMITH (CONT'D)
Mr. Kroc?

He sees Kroc staring off transfixed. He follows his gaze to--
...an ATTRACTIVE BLONDE (early 30s) playing a baby grand piano in the corner. She begins to sing.

PIANO WOMAN
A pretty girl is like a melody...

Smith watches Kroc watch the woman. Kroc is clearly smitten.

ROLLIE SMITH
Would you like to meet her?

This gets Kroc's attention.

MOMENTS LATER--

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

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

SHORT TIME LATER--

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

RAY KROC
...Nashville, Memphis, Milwaukee,
and Dayton, Ohio.

JOAN SMITH
Goodness gracious.

RAY KROC
Oh, and Wilmington, Delaware.

JOAN SMITH
All in the last 18 months?

RAY KROC
Twelve.

JOAN SMITH
Twelve? Why, you must be positively
dizzy, Mr. Kroc.

RAY KROC
Please. Call me Ray.

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

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

ON ROLLIE SMITH-- looking on from Joan's other side, pleased with his wife's work.

ROLLIE SMITH
That's some remarkable growth.

JOAN SMITH
When did you start it?

RAY KROC
Huh?

ON KROC-- caught off guard by the question.

JOAN SMITH
What year? When 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.

JOAN SMITH
(shakes head, marveling)
Amazing.

Kroc smiles; she's got him wrapped around her finger.

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

RAY KROC
To where?

JOAN SMITH
To the piano.

RAY KROC
Of course, of course.

He nods, a little disappointed.

JOAN SMITH
What's your favorite song?

RAY KROC
Favorite song?

JOAN SMITH
Your all-time favorite.

He thinks for a BEAT.

RAY KROC
"Pennies From Heaven".

With a smile, 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 over to the piano. He 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.

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

She smiles at this, 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 and cheering for him, too.

INT. AIRPLANE - NIGHT (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 - LATER

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

ETHEL KROC
(perfunctory)
How was your trip?

RAY KROC
Do you really 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. Everywhere I went, I was showered with adulation, admiration. *Respect*. People were kneeling before me, kissing my ring, practically begging for a McDonald's.

Ethel nods.

ETHEL KROC
That's nice.

RAY KROC
(edge)
It was.

ETHEL KROC
I'm sure.

Kroc glares at her with barely concealed rage. She chuckles passive-aggressively.

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

HARD CUT TO:

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - DAY

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

PHOTOGRAPHER

Let's try a few in front of the map.

A PHOTOGRAPHER leads Kroc over to the expansion map, significantly more crowded with pins now. Kroc strikes the same pose, arms crossed.

PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)

Good, good.

Kroc impulsively grabs a prop McDonald's hamburger off the desk, holding it up for the camera.

PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)

Love it.

Kroc playfully takes a big, pretend bite.

PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)

That's a riot!

(snapping away)

That might be our cover shot.

SHORT TIME LATER--

The photographer and his ASSISTANT are packing up their gear. The photographer hands Kroc a MAGAZINE from a bag.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Our current issue.

Kroc looks at it, **RESTAURANT BUSINESS MONTHLY**. He starts idly flipping through the magazine. He slows at a page.

ANGLE ON a full-page ad for INSTAMIX. A new ad. Above an image of a SPEEDING TRAIN done up in the Instamix colors--

ALL ABOARD! ATTENTION OWNER-OPERATORS: CLIMB ON BOARD THE INSTAMIX EXPRESS AND RIDE YOUR WAY TO GREATER PROFITS!

INSTAMIX, THE CREAMY, FROSTY, POWDERED ICE-CREAM SENSATION -- NOW AVAILABLE IN STRAWBERRY!

ON KROC-- staring at the ad, wheels turning.

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc is at his desk on the phone.

RAY KROC
Remember that problem you were
telling me about?

INT. MCDONALD'S (JIM ZIEN'S) - CONTINUOUS

Jim Zien is on the other end of the line.

JIM ZIEN
My cooler bill? What about it?

RAY KROC
I think I've got the solution.

JIM ZIEN
Yeah? What?

RAY KROC
How about I swing by and show you
in person?

JIM ZIEN
(a bit taken aback)
Swing by Minneapolis?

RAY KROC
("casual")
Sure, why the heck not?

INT. MEN'S ROOM - EVENING

Kroc stands before a men's room mirror, fixing his hair. He
adjusts his tie, making sure it's just so. (It's the first
time we've seen him exhibit such vanity.)

He exits the bathroom, revealing he's in--

INT. ROLLIE'S - CONTINUOUS

He heads to a table near the back where Zien, Zien's WIFE,
and Rollie and Joan Smith are seated, in the middle of
dinner. Kroc retakes his seat next to Joan.

JIM ZIEN
I was telling everybody about the
product.

RAY KROC
It's gonna save you a small
fortune.

ROLLIE SMITH
(small chuckle)
That's funny.

RAY KROC
What?

ROLLIE SMITH
Mr. Multimixer, switching to
powder.

ON KROC-- not amused by the innocent, offhand comment.

RAY KROC
Why's that funny?

The whole table suddenly tenses up.

ROLLIE SMITH
Y'know, it's just... ironic.

RAY KROC
Ironic.

ON JOAN-- horrified by what her husband's stepped into.

ROLLIE SMITH
But not in a bad way. Just because,
y'know, you used to sell the thing
for ice cream...

RAY KROC
And now I'm advocating a powdered
substitute.

ROLLIE SMITH
I mean, yeah, but...
(floundering)
It's a terrific idea. Same great
taste while boosting your bottom
line. That's a win-win. Plus,
freeing up all that cooler space.

Poor Rollie is dying inside. Joan is not happy.

COAT CHECK - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc hands the restaurant's COAT-CHECK GIRL his ticket.

JOAN SMITH (O.S.)
He meant nothing by it.

Joan sidles up to Kroc, desperate to do damage control.

JOAN SMITH (CONT'D)
He has nothing but the utmost
admiration for you and your
success.
(touches Kroc's arm)
As do I.

Their eyes meet.

INT. KROC'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - LATER

Kroc enters the bedroom, home from Minneapolis. He puts his suitcase on the floor by his closet, looks over at his sleeping wife.

ON KROC-- staring stone-faced at Ethel as she sleeps.

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - DAY

Kroc on the phone. He nods, listening with interest.

RAY KROC
Bloomington.

INT. ROLLIE AND JOAN SMITH'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Joan Smith is on the other end of the line.

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

RAY KROC
That's right, I read about that.

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

RAY KROC
I like 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. Or whenever.

RAY KROC

I like the way you think, Joan.

JOAN SMITH

You'd like the way I do a lot of things.

RAY KROC

I have no doubt. You strike me as a woman of a great many tal--

The intercom buzzes. He's not happy about the interruption.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

(into intercom, cranky)
What is it?

JUNE MARTINO (O.S.)

I'm sorry to interrupt, sir. Mac McDonald is on the phone.

RAY KROC

Tell him I'll call back.

JUNE MARTINO (O.S.)

He says it's urgent.

Kroc groans.

MOMENTS LATER--

Kroc presses the other line, irked.

RAY KROC

What is it?

INT. MCDONALD'S - SAN BERNARDINO - CONTINUOUS

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

INT. SAN BERNARDINO - CONTINUOUS

(Intercut as necessary.)

MAC MCDONALD

I just got a very disconcerting call.

RAY KROC

Oh?

MAC MCDONALD

From our operator in Sacramento.

RAY KROC

Buddy Jepsen?

MAC MCDONALD

That's the one. He told me he received an unexpected shipment this morning.

RAY KROC

(excited)

It arrived?

MAC MCDONALD

You are way out of line, Ray.

RAY KROC

I figured it wouldn't get there 'til Friday the earliest.

MAC MCDONALD

What the hell are you doing shipping five cases of Instamix to one of our operators?

RAY KROC

If you're not interested in increasing profits, that's fine. But please don't stop the rest of us.

MAC MCDONALD

You have no right to make any changes without our express permission. And that obviously includes the McDonald's menu.

RAY KROC

Nah.

MAC MCDONALD

Excuse me?

RAY KROC

You heard me. Nah.

MAC MCDONALD

What does that mean?

RAY KROC

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

MAC MCDONALD

You will abide by the terms of your deal.

RAY KROC

To hell with my deal. I've had it with following orders. You and your never-ending barrage of no's.

MAC MCDONALD

You have a *contract*, Ray.

RAY KROC

Don't grow. Don't change. Don't try anything new, ever.

MAC MCDONALD

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

RAY KROC

I have a better understanding of this company than you and your brother combined.

MAC MCDONALD

What did you say?

RAY KROC

I'm in the field, in the trenches. Milwaukee. Hartford. Louisville. *Talking* to our owners, hearing their concerns. Not holed up in some bubble in San Bernardino.

MAC MCDONALD

(BEAT, desperation-tinged)
You have a contract!

Kroc chuckles.

RAY KROC

A contract.

(BEAT)

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

INT. KROC'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - EVENING

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

ETHEL KROC

Please pass the salt.

Ray passes the salt.

ETHEL KROC (CONT'D)

Thank you.

RAY KROC

You're welcome.

A stretch of tense silence. Cutting and chewing.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

I want a divorce.

INT. LAWYER'S OFFICE - DAY

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

RAY KROC

I want out.

LAWYER

It's unfortunately 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

Nearly the exact same scene, except a different office and a DIFFERENT LAWYER.

RAY KROC
--just get me the hell out.

LAWYER #2
She's going to put up a fight.

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

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

RAY KROC
Never.
(BEAT)
I'd sooner die than give that woman
one single share of McDonald's.

INT. SAN BERNARDINO MCDONALD'S - OFFICE - DAY

The brothers enter the office. Dick notices a package on his desk. It's addressed to both of them.

Dick opens it, pulls out a silver-foil Instamix packet. On the front of the packet, it says: **STRAWBERRY**

Dick reaches back into the package, pulls out a handwritten note from Kroc--

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

--BEST, RAY

ON MAC-- looking at the note over Dick's shoulder. A disconcerted look comes over his face.

MAC MCDONALD
What's...?

Dick follows his brother's eyes to the top of the note. It's not on the usual Franchise Realty Corporation letterhead. It's on letterhead for something called **THE MCDONALD'S CORPORATION.**

And it's signed at the bottom **RAYMOND A. KROC - PRESIDENT**

INT. FRANCHISE REALTY CORPORATION - SHORT TIME LATER

June is at the front desk. Behind her, WORKMEN are taking down the Franchise Realty Corporation sign and putting up a new one in its place: **THE MCDONALD'S CORPORATION**

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - SHORT TIME LATER

Kroc is on the phone.

RAY KROC
It was confusing.

INT. SAN BERNARDINO - CONTINUOUS

Mac is on the other end. Dick is there, too.

RAY KROC (O.S.)
No one knew it had anything to do with McDonald's.

MAC MCDONALD
What's *confusing* is you calling yourself "The McDonald's Corporation". People will think it's the whole company, not some real-estate arm. Which I suspect is exactly what you hope.

Dick snatches the phone out of Mac's hands.

DICK MCDONALD
It's not your company, Ray! Do you understand that?

RAY KROC
Dick.

It's the first time Dick has gotten on the phone with Kroc.

DICK MCDONALD
I came up with the Speedee System. Not you.

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

DICK MCDONALD
What did you ever come up with? Name one thing. You're a leech. You're a professional leech.

RAY KROC

I'm sorry you feel that way, Dick.

DICK MCDONALD

I want you out. I want you out of this company.

RAY KROC

And how do you propose to do that?

DICK MCDONALD

I don't care, whatever it takes. We'll sue you if necessary.

RAY KROC

Sue me? Don't make me laugh. 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. And you? You run a burger stand in the desert. You're a *small business owner*. That's all you are, and that's all you'll ever be. A small business owner. A shopkeeper. I'm *national*. You're fucking local.

THUNK.

Dick turns, sees HIS BROTHER ON 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 looks on as a DOCTOR talks to him.

DOCTOR

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 does not nod.

MAC MCDONALD
(understatement of the
century)

Some.

DOCTOR

You need to watch that. Stress is a
big contributing factor.

The doctor flips back to the first page of Mac's chart.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

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

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - EVENING

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

MAC MCDONALD
William Who Rode With Paul Revere.

DICK MCDONALD
Letters?

MAC MCDONALD
Five. Fourth letter E.

Dick thinks for a BEAT.

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 the unwelcome guest.

DICK MCDONALD
What are you doing here?

RAY KROC
I'm here to see the patient.
(to Mac)
Heard you took a spill.

Kroc extends the flowers to him.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
These are for you.

Mac takes the flowers warily, like they're laced with anthrax or something. He notices the CARD that's attached.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Open it.

MAC MCDONALD
No, thanks.

RAY KROC
C'mon. Open the card.

Mac reluctantly opens the envelope. Inside is a GET-WELL CARD. He opens it.

A CHECK falls out. Blank.

MAC MCDONALD
What is this?

RAY KROC
What's it look like?

MAC MCDONALD
It looks like a blank check.

RAY KROC
Well, then that must be what it is.

Mac and Dick look at each other. They look at the check.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
How much should I make it out for?

MAC MCDONALD
That depends. What are you buying?

Kroc flashes a smile.

RAY KROC
The company, of course.

HOSPITAL ROOM - MIDDLE OF NIGHT

Mac lies awake in bed, unable to sleep. Over in the recliner, Dick is awake, too.

After a stretch of silence:

MAC MCDONALD
We'll never beat him.
(BEAT)
We'll never be rid of him.

ON DICK-- gazing off. He knows his brother is right.

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - DAY

Kroc is standing before the franchise map. There are now nearly a hundred pins in it. The intercom buzzes.

JUNE MARTINO (O.S.)
Dick McDonald for you.

Kroc picks up, friendly and casual--

RAY KROC
Hello, Dick.

DICK MCDONALD
\$2.7 million.

RAY KROC
Excuse me?

DICK MCDONALD
\$2.7. That's a million dollars for each of us after taxes.

RAY KROC
(scary calm)
Anything else?

DICK MCDONALD
Yes. One percent of the company's profits. In perpetuity.

INT. KROC'S OFFICE - DAY

Harry Sonneborn sits in Kroc's office.

RAY KROC (O.S.)
It's outrageous!

ON KROC-- angrily pacing.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Borderline extortion.

We see Sonneborn is holding a document, a purchase proposal from the brothers.

HARRY SONNEBORN
And they want one other thing.

ON KROC-- bracing for it.

HARRY SONNEBORN (CONT'D)
San Bernardino.

RAY KROC
What do you mean?

HARRY SONNEBORN
They want to give the original restaurant to their longtime employees. As a gift.

RAY KROC
A gift.

Sonneborn shrugs. Apparently so.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
I need San Bernardino. I was counting on its profits to cover the debt on the loan.

HARRY SONNEBORN
I spoke with their lawyers. They say it's non-negotiable.

ON KROC-- absorbing, nodding.

He violently SMASHES a paperweight on his desk.

INT. LAW OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Kroc and the brothers, flanked by their respective lawyers, are gathered in a conference room. In front of everyone is a copy of a CONTRACT.

KROC'S LAWYER

My client has agreed to your conditions of sale, all of which are reflected in the contract before you, the sole exception being the one percent cut of future corporate earnings, which, upon the insistence of his investor group, will have to be carried out on a handshake basis.

The McDonald brothers and their lawyers nod, seemingly familiar with the condition.

KROC'S LAWYER (CONT'D)

Very well, then.

He reaches into his briefcase and takes out two fountain pens. Slides them across the table to the brothers.

CONFERENCE ROOM - SHORT TIME LATER

Mac and Dick sit alone in the conference room as their lawyers pack up.

ON MAC-- staring at a check for \$1,350,000 in his hands.

ON DICK-- staring at a check for \$1,350,000 in his hands.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Kroc is at the urinal in the law office's rest room. He flushes, heads over to the sink.

The rest room door opens. In walks Mac. He freezes at the sight of Kroc. Kroc smiles amiably.

RAY KROC

Hello, Mac.

ON MAC-- staring searchingly at Kroc.

MAC MCDONALD

I just have to ask you one thing.

RAY KROC

What's that?

MAC MCDONALD

Something I never understood.

RAY KROC

Alright...

MAC MCDONALD

That day we met, when we gave you the tour.

(Kroc nods)

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?

(Mac nods)

Take your ideas and start my own place?

MAC MCDONALD

Yes.

RAY KROC

Because it would have failed.

MAC MCDONALD

How do you know?

RAY KROC

Am I the only one who ever got the kitchen tour?

MAC MCDONALD

No.

RAY KROC

I bet you invited countless people back there. Dozens of would-be burger barons looking to replicate your success.

MAC MCDONALD

We did.

RAY KROC

And how many of them succeeded?

MAC MCDONALD

Lots of people started restaurants of their own.

RAY KROC

Bigger than McDonald's?

Mac is silent.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

Of course not. No one has, and no one ever will. Because they all lack that one thing that makes McDonald's so special.

MAC MCDONALD

Which is...

RAY KROC

See? Even you don't know!

MAC MCDONALD

Enlighten me.

RAY KROC

It's not the system.

(BEAT)

It's the name.

Mac is confused.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

That name, that glorious name... *McDonald*.

(BEAT)

It's wide open. Limitless. It could be anything, anything you want it to be. It sounds like... America.

ON MAC-- straining to understand.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

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 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.

MAC MCDONALD

(sneer)

That's clearly not the case.

RAY KROC

So you don't have a check for \$1.35 million in your pocket?

This silences Mac.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)

That's the mistake your competitors made, all those would-be imitators. They all thought they could simply take your system, slap on some name like Hamburger Hamlet or Roscoe's and *presto*--instant success. But not me. I wasn't so arrogant. I knew there was no beating that name McDonald's. And if you can't beat 'em...

MAC MCDONALD

(small chuckle)

Join 'em.

Kroc gazes off, smiling nostalgically.

RAY KROC

I'll never forget the first time I saw it 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.

MAC MCDONALD

You don't "have" it.

He flashes Mac an unnerving smile.

RAY KROC

You sure about that?

INT. MCDONALD'S - SAN BERNARDINO - DAY

PAN DOWN from the McDonald's sign to...

Dick and Mac with Kroc's lawyers, listening like they're being read their Miranda rights:

LAWYER #1

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 which might create confusion or infringe upon the McDonald's trademark which is now the exclusive intellectual property of Mr. Kroc.

CUT TO:

Workers DISMANTLING THE MCDONALD'S SIGN in San Bernardino. The brothers watch helplessly as their name is removed.

DISSOLVE TO:

A NEW MARQUEE 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 not McDonald's. It's heartbreaking.

PAN ACROSS THE STREET, where--

...a NEW MCDONALD'S is under construction.

A hard-hatted Kroc is on site, watching as the signature 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 Wiley Davis. I'm a reporter for The Los Angeles Examiner. I'm interested in doing a profile of you tied to the opening of your 100th location here.

Kroc thinks it over a beat.

RAY KROC

Call my office. They'll set it up.

He reaches into the breast pocket of his sport jacket.

RAY KROC (CONT'D)
Here's my card.

He takes out a BUSINESS CARD, gives it to the reporter. The reporter looks at it.

ANGLE ON card. Beneath a McDonald's logo, it says, simply:

RAY KROC - FOUNDER

Hold on the words for a long BEAT. Our final image.

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 1 percent cut of royalties. The McDonald brothers never received a cent. Today, that 1 percent promised 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.

Thanks to Harry Sonneborn's idea, McDonald's today is the largest owner of real estate in the world.