

The Last Day at W.O.R.K.

Brandon Daughtry Slocum
and JP Schuffman





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THE LAST DAY AT W.O.R.K.

by Brandon Daughtry Slocum & JP Schuffman

CAST

BUTCH: Radio announcer, early 70's
SHIRLEY: Radio announcer, early 70's
THE PRODUCER: Shy person with few lines
SANDY: Weather reporter
THE MAYOR: Pompous politician
MARGARET BUNTMAYER: Small town socialite
SUSIE: Gardening expert
PRISCILLA: Elvis fan
MADAME CHERI: Psychic
AGNES: Smoker with chronic cough
EVA ROSE: Torch singer
LINDA: Nosy neighbor
DOROTHY: Community theatre actor
ELAINE: Community theatre actor
BART: Banjo player
LAURETTA: Guitar player

The minor parts are meant to be flexible. Feel free to switch genders. Some can be deleted if need be, or changed to fit the talents of your available cast.

Setting: Stage right has a small desk with two chairs behind and a microphone and telephone on top. A microphone on a tall stand is downstage center. There is a raised platform Up Center. There is a desk, chair, an assortment of equipment and Foley artist sound effects stage left center.

At Rise: The lights come on abruptly, and THE PRODUCER enters from UR, hangs up his coat, and silently empties the garbage, starts the coffee, and warms up the equipment. BUTCH and SHIRLEY enter UR, take off their coats, get coffee and sit behind the desk SR during the following.

BUTCH: 'Morning!

SHIRLEY: Good morning. (No reply from THE PRODUCER other than a shy smile) I can't believe this is it.

BUTCH: Come on, Shirley, keep your chin up or it will be a long day. Hey, I was looking through our maps and our routing last night after you went to bed. I think we can swing through St. Louis to see your cousin without going too far out of our way.

SHIRLEY: Do I have a cousin in St. Louis?

BUTCH: Carol and Dave.

SHIRLEY: Who?

BUTCH: You remember...Carol and Dave...your mother's half-sister's daughter and her husband...you remember, they were at your parents' anniversary party in '85...with that weird kid that stayed under the dining room table with your mother's cocker spaniel for three days?

SHIRLEY: Oh, them...why would I want to go see them?

BUTCH: I don't know... see how the kid turned out...see if he's still living under a table with a dog? We pick up our new home tomorrow! Are you excited?

SHIRLEY: Butch, our new home has wheels and a kitchen I can't even turn around in.

BUTCH: I hope the paint job came out well.

SHIRLEY: I still can't believe you paid extra to get that tacky desert scene painted down the side of that motor home.

BUTCH: It makes me feel like I'm riding off into the sunset with Clint Eastwood.

SHIRLEY: It looks like we're going on the road with Willie Nelson. And, I am not convinced you can see well enough to drive something that big.

BUTCH: I docked aircraft carriers, Shirley.

SHIRLEY: When you were 21 years old.

BUTCH: (*leaning over to give her a kiss*) It's our freedom, Shirley. Finally.

SHIRLEY: I have plenty of freedom. With the kids gone and their kids a thousand miles away, the only break I get from my freedom is coming here everyday.

BUTCH: Aren't you looking forward to a little adventure?

SHIRLEY: This station has been an adventure from day one. You remember, when I wrote you in Korea to tell you I had bought the station with the inheritance from my grandmother? And then you came back and we started having kids and we practically raised them here.

BUTCH: I know you would feel a lot better about this if someone had bought the station.

SHIRLEY: Yes, I would. I can't bear the thought of this old place just shutting down forever. We met here, Butch.

BUTCH: Yes, it was 1946 and you were ten years old and wearing pigtails and a lavender dress. You beat me in the talent show competition.

SHIRLEY: We both lost, Butch.

BUTCH: You got third place and I got zilch.

SHIRLEY: We met here, we raised our family here, this was our place in the community, how we contributed to other people. And, now it's all going to end. I miss the good old days.

BUTCH: The good old days weren't that good. We struggled through so much. Life is better now. And, we have nothing but each other and the open road to worry about now. (*nodding toward THE PRODUCER*) Okay, let's do this. (*into the microphone*) Good morning! This is Butch and Shirley signing on with 500 watts at 83.3 on your AM dial.

SHIRLEY: We are glad you have joined us for the last day at W.O.R.K.

BUTCH: We are signing off after 50 years on the air.

SHIRLEY: And, we have all of our regular features today, along with some special guests we've invited back, some of your favorites from way back when.

BUTCH: Without further ado, we'll go to our weather report with Sandy Smith out in the field. *(into the phone)* Sandy, you there? *(SANDY appears from UL on the platform and talks into a cell phone.)* Let me put you on the speaker phone...*(he pushes the button on the phone)*

SANDY: You there, Butch?

BUTCH: Yeah, Sandy.

SANDY: Hey, Shirley, how are you?

SHIRLEY: Oh, very sad and...

BUTCH: So, how's the weather looking for today, Sandy?

SANDY: I got a job, Shirley!

SHIRLEY: That's great! Where are you going?

SANDY: Well, you know, I wanted a place with a little more interesting weather to report, and I got it! I'm going to Oklahoma!

SHIRLEY: Oklahoma?

SANDY: Yes, can you imagine... all those tornados!

BUTCH: That's great, Sandy, we're all real tickled for you. How about that boring old weather around here today?

SANDY: You know, Butch, if you had got me that Doppler Radar back when everybody else got one...if you had listened to me then, then at least there *would* have been something for you and Shirley to sell. Ya'll may be able to read the news on all that junky old equipment, but I can't be expected to predict the weather without the necessary technology.

BUTCH: Then give us your best educated opinion, Sandy...we've been operating on that for how many years now?

SANDY: I officially became W.O.R.K.'s chief meteorologist on June 1, 1971.

BUTCH: And a fine chief meteorologist you have been, my dear.

SANDY: Bye, Shirley. I hope you get lots of interesting and exciting weather for your trip.

SHIRLEY: I hope you like Oklahoma, Sweetie. Be careful around those tornados.

BUTCH: A...I... and, the weather report, Sandy?

SANDY: I think it might rain this afternoon and I would put a blanket at the foot of the bed tonight, just in case.

BUTCH: Thank you.

SANDY: Bye.

SHIRLEY: Well, ya'll heard Sandy. Get your laundry off the line before this afternoon and put a blanket at your feet tonight. You know, she's right more than she's wrong.

(We hear THE MAYOR brushing around UR before she enters, heads for the coffee pot, THE PRODUCER is waiting with her cup, and crosses DRC to the microphone)

BUTCH: And, by the sound of it, our special morning guest has arrived here at W.O.R.K., ladies and gentlemen our distinguished public servant, the Mayor.

THE MAYOR: I just couldn't let this monumental day pass without stopping by to say goodbye to my dear friends, and yours, Butch and Shirley. We are so sorry to lose a community asset such as W.O.R.K. I want you to know that I and the city council are working night and day, folks, night and day to find a buyer for the station, and we plan to have W.O.R.K back on the air just as soon as possible.

BUTCH: We've been looking for a buyer for fifteen years, Mayor, best of luck to you and the city council.

THE MAYOR: Well, speaking for the good folks of this community, you will be missed sorely and W.O.R.K. will be missed sorely. I wish I could talk ya'll into staying in our fair piece of paradise.

SHIRLEY: Butch is looking for a *far* piece of paradise, and expects to find it plugged into an electrical outlet somewhere in the wilds of Montana.

THE MAYOR: Best of luck with that, Butch.

BUTCH: Thank you, Mayor. That's your paid government representative there, folks.

(THE MAYOR bumps into MARGARET BUNTMEYER on exiting UR. MARGARET enters in a frenzy)

SHIRLEY: *(on the phone)* And now, we go back into the field for, good gracious, Margaret, you scared the life out of me!

BUTCH: Mrs. Buntmeyer, you aren't on until this afternoon...much later today.

MARGARET: I fully realize this, Butch, thank you for pointing out to everyone out there in our listening audience that you think I am somewhat senile. Hello, Shirley, my apologies for disrupting the show. Betty Twindle passed away this morning and her family, for some reason unknown to this reporter at this time, is pushing the poor woman into her grave this very afternoon, before an announcement could even be made in the paper. So, I thought it wise to come here this morning and report poor Betty's demise, so that her many friends and neighbors can appropriately respond to her family's time of grief. And, I simply must attend the graveside service during the precious time every afternoon when my dear listeners are waiting anxiously for my society and social happenings report.

BUTCH: Why don't you get on with that then, Mrs. Buntmeyer, and we can hope to get back on schedule by lunchtime. *(she nods but waits...they mime to one another that she is waiting for him to introduce her properly)*

BUTCH: Sorry. And, now, the society report with Mrs. Margaret Buntmeyer, she hasn't missed a funeral, baby shower, wedding or graduation in 50 years---if she wasn't there, it didn't happen---still opposes the playing of rock and roll music on W.O.R.K.--defines rock and roll music as anything that isn't big band our own Emily Post -Mrs. Buntmeyer.

MARGARET: *(reading from notes)* Thank you, Butch. On this historic moment in our history as the age of radio comes to an end, I want to assure my faithful listeners that all the news of their community's leading citizens will still be accessible through my new weekly column in the *Times Register*. I realize that learning the goings on of one's social betters a week after the actual events take place will be a disconcerting experience for my avid fans. I promise you all that my commitment to your social education and training will not be thwarted by

the untimely and frankly, unacceptable loss of this lovely old radio station.

SHIRLEY: Why don't you buy the station, Mrs. Buntmeyer?

MARGARET: Dear Shirley, a woman of my status does not work. I contribute to the betterment of my fellow citizens as a person in my position is expected to do, but I do not work.

BUTCH: Then why have I been paying her?

SHIRLEY: Shush, Butch. Thanks for everything, Margaret.

MARGARET: (*exiting*) Enjoy meeting all the fascinating people I am sure you will find in KOA campgrounds all over our beautiful country.

BUTCH: (*on the phone*) Okay, that's over. And we're going back out into the field for our morning report from everyone's favorite Gardening Expert, Susie Masterson. (*SUSIE appears on the platform UC*) Susie, you there?

SUSIE: Yeah.

SHIRLEY: We got you on the speaker phone, Susie... go ahead.

SUSIE: I got you on speaker phone too, Shirley.

SHIRLEY: That's great, Susie. How about that farm report?

SUSIE: I don't feel much up to doing it today, Shirley?

SHIRLEY: You haven't missed a report, well, ever. What's the matter with you?

SUSIE: I miss Marty.

SHIRLEY: I know you do. But, he's been gone fourteen years in April. Susie, what's bothering you?

END OF FREEVIEW

You'll want to read and perform this show!