


Blake brings the barnyard to the bar in a new TV commercial.





BLAKE SHELTON SITS AT THE BAR of a dimly lit Nashville honky-tonk, slyly flashing his sexiest smile to the sweet young thing sitting next to him. She's dressed in form-fitting wool, and her big brown eyes meet his just as the drink he's bought for her arrives.

Sensing the time is right to close the deal on his low-rent rendezvous, Blake delivers one of his best pick-up lines.

"You must be tired," Blake says with a seductive grin. "You've been runnin' through my mind all night."

She looks at him, bats her eyes and the director yells "Cut!" The room explodes as onlookers *finally* are free to laugh at

and eatin' chicken in *front* of a live chicken? Just stupid stuff."

Blake is certainly willing to make fun of himself – and he did a lot of it in the video for "Some Beach," his already Top 20 debut single from *Barn*. The video follows the song's story line about a guy who seems to encounter rude people wherever he goes – driving down the highway, waiting patiently for a parking space or for his name to be called at the dentist's office. And he responds to them in the best way he can – by wishing he were on some beach.

"Everybody's been in those situations," explains Blake. "And I think that's why the song appeals to fans so much. People hear that first verse about drivin' down the interstate. That happens to all of us.

"I can't remember a time I haven't

SHEP entertainment

With a Top 20 hit, a great new album and a first wedding anniversary approaching soon, Blake Shelton is enjoying the good life – and talking to the animals.

Story by David Scarlett

Photos by Chris Hollo/Hollo Photographics

Blake – and the *sheep* (yep, that's right, a real sheep) he's trying to pick up!

Fortunately, this is not a misguided romance, but rather a commercial shoot to promote Blake's just-released third album, *Blake Shelton's Barn & Grill*. And Blake's loving every minute of it.

"The whole point of the album is not to take it that seriously," he smiles. "Just listen to it and have fun with it. The record company's been great about lettin' me decide how to approach the promotion, so I told them, 'Let's do some commercials with me hittin' on a sheep in a bar ...

thought, 'Aw! You *idiot!*' And the reality of it is, somebody's sayin' that to *you* every day, too," laughs Blake.

"You just don't know it!"

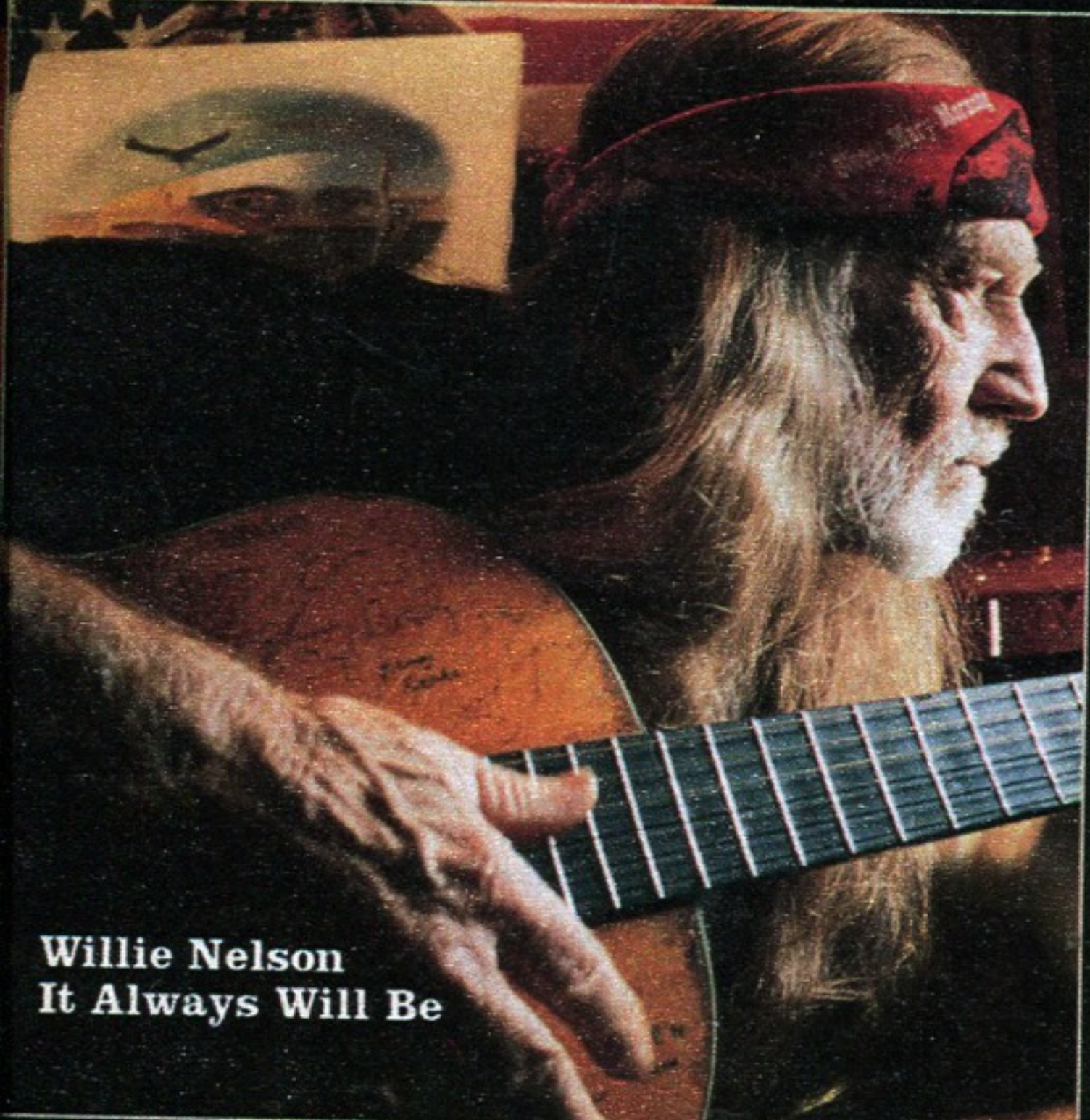
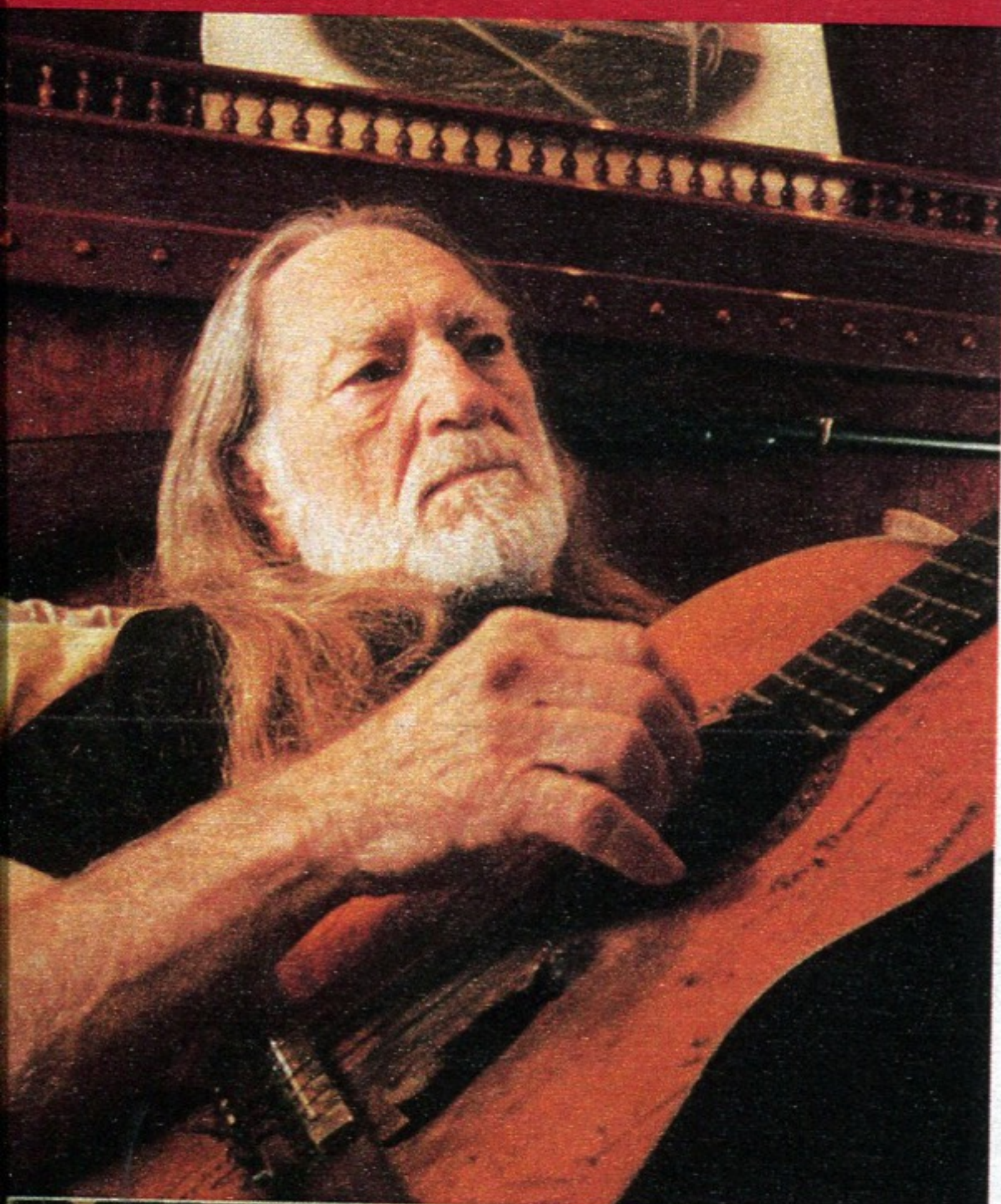
The lighthearted tune is in contrast to "The Baby" and "Austin," a couple of earlier No. 1 hit ballads made into dramatic videos that featured Blake just sitting and singing. But this time, it's all about having fun.

And Blake's surrounded by familiar faces in the video. His pretty wife, Kaynette, makes a cameo appearance as a dental patient, and Blake's producer,

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Getting behind the wheel for his "Some Beach" video

BLAKE SHELTON

Bobby Braddock, puts in a great performance as a scary-looking dentist who, as the lyrics say, *Started drillin' before I was numb!*

Blake's buddy, NASCAR driver Elliott Sadler, puts his driving skills to good use during a scene on the interstate. And one other non-actor got right into the spirit of the video!

"We almost lived the song," laughs Blake. "Elliott and I were drivin' down the road in two cars. He had to pull up next to me, cuss me out and flip me off."

"We had a police escort going down the highway outside Nashville. They were blockin' traffic behind us, and this guy on a Harley didn't appreciate it. So when he drove up next to me, he really did kind of mouth at me and kept on drivin'. I wish we'd had the camera on. We wouldn't have had to hire all these actors!"

But there's no acting required when Blake talks about his latest batch of tunes. They're unerringly faithful to the traditional lovin', leavin' and drinkin' country music themes he loves.

"When I listen to the album, I almost feel like I'm sittin' in some dusty honky-tonk somewhere or some little dried-up barn," he admits. "And that's kinda how we came up with the title for the album."

"I wanted to make it as country as I could, and as true to *me* as I could – since I'm just startin' to figure out what that is. I'm real proud of it."

The album is a great mix of up-tempo tunes like "Some Beach" and "Cotton Pickin' Time," plus some powerful ballads like "When Somebody Knows You That Well" and "Goodbye Time," a song originally cut

by one of Blake's idols, Conway Twitty.

"I've wanted to record that song for a long time," admits Blake. "I can remember when TNN was still a country network, and they did one of those 'life and times' specials on Conway. I watched, and at the end, they rolled the credits with a live performance of Conway singin' 'Goodbye Time.' I'd never heard it before."



Married for a year - and still smiling!

"I remember watchin' him sing it – his knees were bent and he was all sweaty. And I thought, 'Man, *that's* how you sing a song.' I wanted to see if I could put that much into a song. But the timing never seemed right until now."

The song is one of Blake's most memorable performances, and it's obvious he's at the top of his game vocally. The same could be said of his personal life as he and Kaynette prepare to celebrate their Nov. 17 first anniversary.

"Are you tired of me yet?" Blake asks her jokingly. "Not yet," she says with a smile.

All kidding aside, the two are glad they never experienced the "everything changes once you're married" syndrome they'd been warned of.

"It sure hasn't happened with us yet," proclaims Blake. "And I don't see it happenin', because we were already so completely honest with each other. If one of us changed – *that* would be the lie, you know? We just know each other too well."

But the big question is – was Kaynette aware of Blake's unusual interest in sheep before she agreed to marry him?

"Yeah, she knows I'm a sicko," laughs Blake.

"And she's accepted that." **CW**

BLAKE & KAYNETTE - LAURA FARR/ADMEDIA