

Crazy Excerpt

MUSICAL NUMBERS

(PD = Public Domain)

Act 1

- 01- Listen to a Country Song; Words and music by Al Garth and Jim Messina; © Universal Music Publishing Group
- 02- Black Street Blues; Words and Music: Becky Siamon
- 03- The Trouble With Hank; Words and Music: Becky Siamon
- 04- Anytime; Music and Lyrics: Herbert "Happy" Lawson; Public Domain
- 05- Crazy He Calls Me; Words: Carl Sigman, lyrics: Bob Russell. ©1985 by Harrison Music Corp/Major Songs
- 06- dr blues; Words and Music: Becky Siamon

Act 2

- 07- Pigeon In the Snow; Words and Music: Becky Siamon
- 08- Asleep At The Wheel; Words and Music: Becky Siamon
- 09- Hockey Pucks; Words and Music: Becky Siamon
- 10- So Happy; Words and Music: Becky Siamon

TIME

The mid to late 1970s

PLACE

A small Ontario town or city.

SETTING

Simple staging. No real background. Key items, such as windows, banners, etc. can be flown when necessary or projected. Furniture and such on wheels so that they can be rolled on and off stage quickly. The scenes change fluidly with little interruption as possible. Actors change the props for most of the scenes but stage hands acting as rudies could also change props, especially for the bar scenes.

ACT 1

SCENE 1

Before the opening curtain with the preshow lights on in the theatre as well as work lights on the stage, EDDIE, PHIL, DAVE and DEL come on stage and set up for the opening song. THEN STAGE LIGHTS GO TO BLACKOUT.

A bar/hotel in a midsize, southern Ontario town. (Could be any small town.) Behind the band is their banner: *Hound Dog Men*. Stage performance lighting. EDDIE on electric guitar in the centre. PHIL on bass to one side of EDDIE. DAVE on keyboards on the other side. Behind the three is DEL on drums who plays with somewhat over-the-top enthusiasm. PHIL always looks serious. And DAVE is into whatever song they're playing.

(In the BLACKOUT, the band is finishing up their set, some classic rock song from the fifties. There is sparse audience applause. Then lights up.)

EDDIE

Thank you. Thank you. *(sarcastically)* You've been a great audience.

(He goes into his end-of-the-night routine, pointing his guitar as he introduces the band members.)

EDDIE

On bass, Phil, big brother, Baxter. (PHIL does a brief solo without much enthusiasm.) Dave, lightning fingers, Brooks on keyboard. (DAVE plays a few bars of the last song.) Del, big daddy, Baxter on drums. (DEL does a brief solo, ending with a drum roll.) And I'm Eddie Baxter saying "Goodnight Mrs. Calabash, wherever you are." (He plays a Duane Eddy type riff.)

(The band does one last flourish. There is a longer beat of silence and then we hear one person clapping.)

(Everyone starts to pack up.)

DEL

Great show, son. *(NOT!)* It won't be long before we're playing the Fillmore.

EDDIE

(without looking at anyone while he's packing up his guitar, unplugging amps, coiling cables, etc.) So ten o'clock is good for everybody?

(PHIL and DEL exchange looks.)

PHIL

I don't know, Eddie. Jen'll be sleeping and I have to look after Phil Junior.

EDDIE

(sighs) We're just gonna be in the basement. You can bring the baby.

PHIL

He cries. And besides, it's gonna wake up Jen.

EDDIE

Jesus, Phil. The basement been sound proofed, for Pete's sake. We spent all that friggin' money last summer.

PHIL

Yeah, I know.

EDDIE

How about you, Dave.

DAVE

(shrugs) Whatever.

DEL

Son, we don't need any more rehearsal. We need an audience.

EDDIE

You guys were slow coming in on "Kansas City."

DAVE

Was I slow?

EDDIE

No, you were okay, Dave.

DEL

We can pick it up on Monday. I sleep in on Sundays.

EDDIE

Not going to happen, dad. Let's say three. On Sunday. Just for an hour or two. I want to add a couple of songs.

DEL

(*to himself*) As if that's going to make a difference.

EDDIE

What?

DEL

Nothing. Just clearing my throat.

(*LORNE enters from the audience.*)

LORNE

(coming onstage) Hey guys.

DEL

Hey Lorne. What's the good word?

LORNE

Eddie, we got to talk. (He's following EDDIE as he packs up.)

EDDIE

Talk?

DEL

(*to DAVE*) You coming tonight? Peter's got some great stuff.

DAVE

I don't know. Maybe later.

DEL

Supposed to be a good party.

EDDIE

Dad, you should lay off that stuff.

DEL

I'm not doing anything hard. Just recreational, son.

LORNE

I said we gotta talk.

EDDIE

Okay. I'm listening. (*when LORNE doesn't say anything*) You missed the set tonight. I think it's a lot better now. We added a few tunes. Not the fifties, but I think they work. More spice. More zing.

DEL

Zing? What're you? On Lawrence Welk?

LORNE

(to EDDIE) We got to talk.

EDDIE

So talk. I'm listening.

DEL

What's up Lorne?

LORNE

Phil already knows.

DEL

(to himself) I can guess.

(DEL and DAVE look at PHIL.)

LORNE

We're not drawing big crowds here.

DEL

We're not drawing any crowds.

(EDDIE continues packing up, not looking at LORNE. PHIL is ready to leave.)

LORNE

(looks at DEL and DAVE who are looking at him) The rest of the show's been cancelled.

DEL

(to DAVE) What did I tell you.

LORNE

And the Thanksgiving gig and the one at Halloween and Christmas.

EDDIE

Jesus! Did you talk to Lee?

LORNE

Talk to Lee! What do you think I've been doing all week?

EDDIE

I'll talk to him.

LORNE

Hell, Eddie. When are you going to get your head out of the sand? Just because he's an old high school buddy of mine doesn't help him pay his costs.

DEL

So we're cancelled? You got something else?

EDDIE

We haven't had such bad crowds.

DEL

We haven't had no crowds.

LORNE

Nobody wants old style rock anymore. They want cover bands. They want to dance. Zeppelin, AC/DC, the Stones, the Beatles.

EDDIE

That's stoner music. I'm not going to play that shit.

DEL

I think we need more Elvis. That's what brings in the girlies. And maybe a little bit of country, too. Like we used to.

EDDIE

Shut up, dad.

DEL

Don't cut off your nose to spite your face, son. That's all I'm saying.

EDDIE

Shut up, dad.

LORNE

(suspicious) What does he mean?

EDDIE

Nothing. Okay, we can add a ... something. Beatles, or whatever. I'm already working on some more new numbers. We're going to go over them tomorrow and they'll be ready for Monday night.

LORNE

I said, Lee cancelled the bookings.

DAVE

(to DEL) Can he do that? Don't we have a contract. (DEL shrugs)

LORNE

It's going to take more than a couple of new songs. Get real, Eddie. Phil's working at Home Hardware. I'm doing books for Saunders and O'Brien. And your slaving away at Mid-Town Lumber. Don't you get the picture? We're not making enough to cover our beers.

DEL

Hey, I thought they were on the house.

LORNE

What house?

EDDIE

So okay, we've had a little down time.

LORNE

Is that what you call the crowd tonight?

EDDIE

But how about when we played Kingston and then did all those university gigs?

LORNE

That was two years ago.

(Silence while everybody thinks about what Lorne has said.)

DAVE

Yeah. That was some good times.

EDDIE

We could do that again.

PHIL

Well, I gotta go.

DEL

Yeah. Me too. (He starts to exit.) Son, like I been trying to get it through that thick scull of yours. Lorne is right. It's going to take more than a few new songs to get us going again. You know what you have to do. Let bygones be bygones.

EDDIE

Dad!

DEL

Okay. Okay. But she's in town. That's all I'm saying.

LORNE

Who's in town?

DEL

(looking at EDDIE) My lips are sealed. Ask Eddie.

LORNE

Ask him what? What does he mean?

EDDIE

Nothing.

PHIL

Okay, I'm leaving guys.

EDDIE

Tomorrow at three.

(PHIL shrugs)

DEL

(to PHIL) Wait up, son. *(to EDDIE)* How 'bout some cash for your old man. It's Saturday night after all.

EDDIE

(suddenly disgusted with everyone) It's Sunday morning and I don't have anything.

DAVE

(when DEL looks at him) Don't look at me. I just have what I need for tonight.

DEL

(to PHIL) How 'bout you big brother?

PHIL

I only have enough for bus fare. I gotta go.

DEL

(to LORNE) Hey, I thought we was supposed to split the gate at the end of the week.

LORNE

(to DEL) Yeah. Half of nothing. *(to EDDIE)* Okay, listen. That's why we got to talk. *(to DEL)* Privately.

DEL

Well then, maybe I'll stick around and hear what you got to say to little son, here.

LORNE

When the time's right, we'll tell you.

DEL

Time seems pretty right to me.

LORNE

Oh hell. Here. (hands DEL a twenty)

DEL

What about you, big son? Coming with me?

PHIL

I can't dad. Jen's got the night shift at Tim's. I gotta be home with the baby.

LORNE

(to EDDIE, privately) So can we talk?

EDDIE

I thought we were talking.

DEL

Don't be such a pussy, son. I know she doesn't start 'till four.

PHIL

Can't dad. Did you find your key? Or should I leave the front door unlocked?

EDDIE

Don't worry, Phil. I'll be up.

PHIL

I gotta go. (exits with his bass)

DEL

(to DAVE) Sure you're not coming?

DAVE

Maybe later.

DEL

Okay. My chariot awaits. (*just before he exits, to LORNE*) Just ask Eddie.

LORNE

Ask him what?

DEL

Just ask him. (*He exits.*)

LORNE

(to DAVE, wanting him to leave) You got some place to go?

DAVE

I'm no in a hurry.

(JOLENE enters from audience side. She goes up to the front of the stage and stands there. She has several sheets of music in her hands. She's dressed casually, jeans, etc., but she's wearing high-heeled western boots. She's nervous. No one on the stage notices her.)

LORNE

Okay. So what I want to—

EDDIE

Listen, I told you. I'll settle this up with Lee. I'll tell him what I'm planning on doing and we can drop a few dates to make him happy.

LORNE

This is not about Lee. That's already been settled. We're out of here. He's getting Jerry Orlando's group. I forgot their new name.

EDDIE

Those bunch of hippies. All they do is make noise.

LORNE

Well, it's the kind of noise people want to hear.

EDDIE

(to DAVE) You heard 'em?

DAVE

Yeah. Noise.

EDDIE

We'll talk on Monday. Or better yet, come around at three in the aft and you can hear for yourself what I want—

LORNE

Damn it, Eddie. You can't put me off any longer. If we don't have any gigs, then we don't have a band. Isn't that right, Dave?

DAVE

You won't get an argument from me.

LORNE

What this band needs is an attraction. That's what I've been trying to tell you for—

EDDIE

What? Like a trapeze artist? We don't need some monkey on a rope to get an audience.

LORNE

Well, you sure need something.

EDDIE

All right. All right. Let's not fight. We'll talk about this on Monday.

LORNE

Eddie, I can't get this band any more gigs without—

EDDIE

I said, we'll talk on Monday.

LORNE

No. We'll talk now.

EDDIE

(tired) Okay. Talk.

LORNE

I think I found us an attraction.

EDDIE

What? A circus performer?

LORNE

Be serious, Eddie. You know what I mean.

EDDIE

I am serious. I thought we already killed that idea.

LORNE

You killed it. Not me.

EDDIE

I said, no girl singers. Not now. Not tomorrow. Not ever.

LORNE

And I say, no bookings, no band.

DAVE

You know, Eddie, Lorne's got a point.

EDDIE

Shut up, Dave.

(DAVE shrugs. He doesn't take anything seriously or personal. He sits on a speaker and waits for the outcome of whatever is going to happen.)

LORNE

I have someone in mind.

EDDIE

I'm beat. We'll talk later. I gotta go.

(LORNE finally notices JOLENE.)

LORNE

Oh gee, how long have been here?

JOLENE

For awhile. I saw the show.

LORNE

Eddie this is Jolene ... *(looks at her)*

JOLENE

Morgan.

(EDDIE gives her a quick glance and starts to exit.)

LORNE

Eddie wait. (He motions to JOLENE to come up on stage.)

(She slowly makes her way up onto the stage. She's really nervous and has trouble walking in her boots because she's not used to walking in high heels.)

LORNE (Continued)

Just hear me out for a sec.

(JOLENE is on the stage)

LORNE (Continued)

Eddie, this is Jolene ... Jolene Morgan.

EDDIE

(gives her a cold glance) I said no girl singers. *(to JOLENE)* Nothing personal.

LORNE

Just give her a chance, Eddie. Just listen to her. *(takes EDDIE aside)*

DAVE

Hi there. *(JOLENE nods)* I'm Dave.

(Through the rest of the dialogue, JOLENE is becoming more and more uncomfortable.)

LORNE

She's got a really good voice. And I've already talked to the Shaw Agency. I gave them a demo tape. They liked it. They like you, too. You know that. They say they can get us three, maybe four weeks in Northern Ontario. Then, who knows. It's a chance to get back on the circuit.

EDDIE

They only handle country groups.

LORNE

So?

EDDIE

So. No country songs. No girl singers.

LORNE

This is a guarantee, Eddie. Real money. Real audiences. Who knows, maybe a record deal. Anything's possible.

EDDIE

All because of *her*? You got to be kidding. And Northern Ontario? What do you take us for? A bunch of miners?

DAVE

I don't know. It would be nice to make some real money for a change.

EDDIE

Shut up, Dave.

LORNE

Just listen to her. That's all I ask.

EDDIE

(not going to listen to her) Okay. Give me the tape.

LORNE

I don't have the tape. The Shaw Agency has it.

EDDIE

So make a new one and give it to me.

LORNE

Just listen to her. One song.

EDDIE

No. Girl singers are poison for the group. You know what happened.

LORNE

She's not like that. She's a nice kid.

EDDIE

Yeah. They all say that.

LORNE

One song. She's got a great voice and writes her own music.

EDDIE

Well, if she has such a great voice, why isn't she with some group?

LORNE

I don't know. That's not the point.

EDDIE

Well, it seems to me the point. (*to JOLENE*) Where did you last sing? In the shower?

(JOLENE nervously looks at EDDIE. She plays with the papers in her hands.)

EDDIE (Continued)

We'll talk on Monday. I'm out of here.

LORNE

Stop, Eddie. I didn't want to get into this, but—I'm not waiting until Monday. We have to settle this now. You don't have to go with Jolene if you don't want to. But no girl singer, no group and no Lorne. I'm through. It's no fun looking after someone else's books, but at least it pays the

rent. Hell, I can't even afford my own car. And you're driving your dad's old van and living in his house. And Phil takes the bus. What kind of life is that?

EDDIE

It's a life.

LORNE

I mean it, Eddie.

EDDIE

What're you trying to do? Blackmail me?

LORNE

It's not blackmail. It's the facts of life. You guys gotta play what people want to hear.

EDDIE

And if all people want to hear is "Tie the friggin' ribbon around the old friggin' tree"?

LORNE

Well, then you swallow your stupid pride and play it.

EDDIE

(to DAVE) You'd play that shit?

DAVE

Whatever. It's not going to kill us. We can still work in some good stuff. Educate the masses.

EDDIE

Since when did you become a philosopher? (to LORNE) There's plenty of groups without a girl singer.

LORNE

Yeah. In garages and basements. Just listen to her. That's all I ask. Then we'll talk.

EDDIE

I'm not going through this again. You add a girl to the mix and pretty soon everybody's fighting over her and then—

LORNE

For Pete sake, get over it. It's been five years since Tracy's been gone. And she's not Tracy. She's just a singer. (*They have had this argument before.*) How long are you going to carry that damn torch?

EDDIE

I'm carrying nothing for her.

LORNE

One song. If you don't like her, I'll find someone else. One song or I'm out of here. Friendship with you and Phil or no friendship, I gotta have a life, too.

(EDDIE thinks it over.)

EDDIE

Where'd you find her?

LORNE

(suddenly embarrassed; looks at JOLENE) She's ... uh ... my cleaning lady.

EDDIE

She's your what?

LORNE

She's works for this agency. She came in and cleaned my apartment a few times.

(JOLENE has been taking all this in, feeling more and more insecure.)

JOLENE

(trying to defend herself) I'm just a sub. Just temporary.

EDDIE

(to LORNE after he gives JOLENE a look) Oh great. Jesus Christ! What're you trying to do, play the big-time promoter with the girls?

LORNE

It's not like that. *(to JOLENE)* It's not like that, is it? *(JOLENE shakes her head)* I came back early one time and she was there—

EDDIE

Cleaning.

LORNE

—and she was singing to herself. And well, we got to talking. She sang one of her songs. She's got a good voice and I like her music. And she said she'd won this talent contest when she was eighteen. And—

EDDIE

You gotta be kidding. Your cleaning lady?

JOLENE

(to LORNE; all she wants to do is leave) I told you, Mr. Baldwin, this wasn't a good idea. (She starts to exits off stage.)

EDDIE

You're damn right it wasn't. (*He starts to exit.*) Talent contest at eighteen? Why Phil and I were on the circuit with dad when I was sixteen.

LORNE

Wait both of you. (*to JOLENE*) Just give Eddie a chance. He's going to change his mind when he hears you.

JOLENE

I don't think I can do this.

EDDIE

What did I tell you. She does sing in the shower.

JOLENE

(*to EDDIE*) Damn it, listen, you. You don't know me. You don't know what I can or can't do. Mr. Baldwin's right. I heard some of your show. It's nothing special. You just sound like all those other bands who got nothing to say. Nothing to sing about.

EDDIE

Yeah?

JOLENE

Yeah. You got no heart.

EDDIE

And you do?

JOLENE

I'm not saying I do.

EDDIE

Exactly.

JOLENE

And if you think you're wasting your time listening to me. Well, I'd be wasting my time singing with someone like you.

(There's a moment of silence while the guys take in what she has said.)

JOLENE (Continued)

And I don't sing in the shower.

(She walks off the stage into the audience.)

LORNE

Wait, Jolene. (*She stops, her back to the stage.*) I'm going to ask again, Eddie. One song.

EDDIE

She says she doesn't want to sing with me.

LORNE

I'm not asking you to sing with her. Just listen. Are you too pig headed to do that?

(There is a beat of silence while EDDIE considers.)

EDDIE

Okay. But I get to decide. Not you.

LORNE

Fair enough. That's all I'm asking.

(All three guys look at JOLENE.)

JOLENE

(nervous) I don't know, Mr. Baldwin. Like I told you before. Maybe I'm not ready for this.

EDDIE

Won a talent contest. Some talent. Next time, don't bring me your hired help. If you want to add a girl to the group, find a professional. Hey, and I thought you said you were poor. What're you doing hiring cleaning ladies?

(JOLENE goes back on stage and hands EDDIE her sheet music. She's not going to be intimidated by someone like EDDIE.)

JOLENE

Here.

EDDIE

(reluctantly takes sheets) What's this?

JOLENE

My music.

EDDIE

God! I don't want to hear *your* music. And you said you wouldn't sing with us.

JOLENE

I said I wouldn't sing with *you*.

EDDIE

So?

JOLENE

So I changed my mind.

(EDDIE gives LORNE a “look.”)

LORNE

Damn it, Eddie. One of these days you’re gonna drive me crazy.

EDDIE

I thought I was already doing that.

LORNE

Just one song. Then we’ll talk. Just you and me. Okay?

EDDIE

I said, I decide.

LORNE

That’s good enough for me.

(DAVE gets up. EDDIE looks at the music a beat before DAVE takes it out of hands.)

DAVE

(to JOLENE) What do you want to sing?

EDDIE

(takes back the music and looks at it) Hey, this isn’t your music. You didn’t write this stuff. What’re you trying to pull?

JOLENE

I know. These are the songs I’ve been practicing.

DAVE

(goes over to his keyboard and starts to set up) You pick the song, honey, and I’ll back you up.

EDDIE

Forget it, Dave. If Miss Shower Singer here wants to sing for her supper, she can do it without a backup.

LORNE

Come on, Eddie. Don’t be such an ass.

EDDIE

You said you're a singer. So sing. A pro doesn't need a backup. If you were one, you'd know that.

LORNE

Come on, Eddie.

EDDIE

Shut up, Lorne. You want me to hear her sing? Okay. But she sings the way I want her to sing or nothing.

(A beat of silence while JOLENE considers.)

JOLENE

Can I have my music back?

EDDIE

If you've been practicing, then you should know them by heart. You wanted to sing. So sing. *(to LORNE)* That's my deal. She sings. I consider. She doesn't sing, you forget about the girl singer. And if that means you're out of here ... Well, the hell with you.

(A beat of silence. All eyes on JOLENE.)

JOLENE

(small voice) Okay.

EDDIE

Speak up, cleaning lady. If you want to sing with us, you gotta be heard.

LORNE

Hell, Eddie. Give her a break.

EDDIE

Stay out of this Lorne. You started this but I'm going to finish it. *(to JOLENE)* Well?

(JOLENE takes a deep breath and nervously starts to sing the Hank Williams' song, I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry. But halfway through the first verse, her voice tightens up and she runs out of breath.)

JOLENE

(in tears) You bastard!

(She runs off stage and out through the audience.)

LORNE

(after she is gone.) You are a bastard.

EDDIE

(feels bad despite his anger) Yeah. I guess I am. *(contrite, but too late)* Okay, okay. Not one of my better moments. Maybe you should go after her and tell her ...

LORNE

What? That you're a bastard? She already knows that.

EDDIE

Okay. Point taken. Tell her ... tell her whatever you want. Tell her ... Oh, hell, tell her I'm crazy, but it was nothing personal. Tell her I don't know what I'm saying half the time.

LORNE

I doubt if that's going to do it.

EDDIE

Whatever. You win. Tell her she's in the band. If she won't do it, find me another girl. Then we can all go on your friggin' Northern Ontario gig and do the friggin' Yellow Ribbon until we really are crazy. *(picks up his guitar case)* Come by tomorrow at three and we can go over with the guys what we gotta do. Or I guess it's today. *(to DAVE)* At three.

DAVE

Sure. See ya then. *(He exits.)*

LORNE

(after a beat of silence) What did Del mean, just ask you?

EDDIE

(really tired) You don't want to know. If she's willing to try again, tell her to come over at three, too. I'll be on my best behaviour.

LORNE

Okay. Good. I'll talk to her. But you're still a bastard.

EDDIE

(a beat) Yeah, I know.

(LORNE exits. END of SCENE)