

# THE KING AND ME

A MUSICAL COMEDY

DAVE WARNER

davew.author@bigpond.com  
61299077962

PSYCHIATRIST OFFICE

(CRAIG NELSON, late forties, an ineffectual man who has been through the wringer physically and emotionally. He sits in front of THE FEMALE PSYCHIATRIST.)

CRAIG

I know it sounds crazy. That's what happened.

PSYCHIATRIST

Craig if you admit to simply moving a body, well with your unblemished record you may get a suspended sentence. But if you stick to your story I will have to say that in my expert opinion you are insane. You could spend a very long time in an institution.

CRAIG

I'm sorry, Doc. It's the truth. I was there doing my usual gig in the Ruxton.

(Lights dim)

CRAIG

The pokies in full swing, nobody paying me any attention.

INT. RSL CLUB - NIGHT

CRAIG (sings)

Santa never made it into Darwin a big wind came and blew the town away.

(He finishes. No response. Just the robotic chime of pokies.)

CRAIG

Thank you everybody. As always you've been a wonderful audience, and remember next week it's my tenth anniversary show of AUSTRALIA'S SENSATIONAL SENTIMENTAL AND SOMETIMES SAD SEVENTIES. Can you believe it? Ten wonderful years of Thursday nights here in the Ruxton Lounge? I hope you're looking forward to the next ten as much as me. Just a reminder: the Jane Scali tribute act, SCALICTRIX, will be on next Saturday, tickets available at the Keno window.

LIGHTS OUT

CRAIG'S FLAT - NIGHT

(A large poster of Elvis Presley dominates a very basic but neat flat.)

(Craig dictates to a recorder.  
Outside thunder rolls)

CRAIG

Sensational, Sentimental and Sometimes Sad 70s show 665,  
Ruxton RSL, October 2003. Tried switching *Chunder In The  
Old Pacific Sea* to the last bracket, seemed to work much  
better - especially with carvery special of Moussaka:  
Thought: Entire bracket of Barry McKenzie songs.

(He clicks off his recorder, looks  
up at the Elvis poster)

CRAIG

Am I wasting my time? It feels like it sometimes. Actually  
most of the time. If it wasn't for you ...

(He sings, half-writing the song  
as he goes)

CRAIG

My life was heading for a ... worthless wreck a total mess  
a what the heck ... then I heard his voice and I came to  
believe ...

(His doorbell buzzes. That's  
curious. He opens it. A  
mysterious WOMAN wearing no shoes  
barges in)

ELVIRA

The Club gave me your address.

(She spies cooked sausages)

ELVIRA

Do you mind?

(she picks one up  
and wolfs it  
down)

I haven't eaten in so long. These are very good.

(Craig is checking her out, no  
shoes, kind of wild)

CRAIG

Do I know you?

ELVIRA

Does anybody ever know anybody? I saw your show ...  
extraordinary.

(Craig is a little mollified.)

CRAIG

Really?

ELVIRA

Believe me I've never seen anything like it.

CRAIG

I try to be innovative. First person I know to do a whole bracket of disaster songs. I'm sorry, you are ...?

ELVIRA

Elv ... ira. Got any hooch? Early Times. Straight up.

CRAIG

Elvira, I'm glad you liked the show but now is not a good time. You'll have to go.

ELVIRA

That would be a huge mistake.

(Elvira spots a wine bottle near  
70s wedding photos. She picks it  
up.)

ELVIRA

This plonk will do.

CRAIG

That's not "plonk." It's my wedding wine. 25 years it's been there.

ELVIRA

It must be good by now.

CRAIG

You bet. It's a classic.

ELVIRA

(reads the label)

Cold...Duck.

(Craig plucks the bottle and returns  
it. She spies the photos)

ELVIRA

And these are your wedding photos! Look at those sideboards - you look the image of ...

(Craig's eyes travel to the Elvis  
poster and he mugs, in expectation)

ELVIRA

...Sony Bono.

(Craig is annoyed)

ELVIRA

And let's see...two, three...FIVE bridesmaids. And three flower girls.

CRAIG  
Leanne designed the outfits herself.

ELVIRA  
Leanne's your wife?

CRAIG  
Er, yes.

ELVIRA  
You know some things in the 70s were very excessive, weren't they? But, see, these outfits are simple and nice. A nice color, apricot.

CRAIG  
We wanted something to match the chicken.

(Elvira is confused)

CRAIG  
That was the main course, apricot chicken. Soup Du Jour, Lychees and Icecream. Everyone just raved.

(Elvira finds another photo. Smirks cheekily.)

ELVIRA  
The bucks' night.

CRAIG  
I didn't have a bucks' night.

ELVIRA  
Smoking gun, Craig. Her g-string is up around her ears. If her boobs were real-estate five of your mates would be sharing a duplex.

(Craig snatches the photo off her.)

ELVIRA  
It's on public display, obviously Leanne knows.

CRAIG  
That is Leanne.

ELVIRA  
Oh.

CRAIG  
And they're *not* my mates. I don't even know those men. It was our honeymoon, Leanne slipped out for a nightcap while I was doing the thank-you cards.

(His phone rings. Craig races to it)

CRAIG

Leanne, about the divorce. It's premature.

(Elvira extracts ice-cream from  
the freezer.)

LEANNE (O.S.)

Craig the only thing about our marriage that was premature  
was you. For twenty-three years.

CRAIG

I got better with therapy.

LEANNE (O.S.)

Oh yeah I was enthralled laying back listening to your  
ball by ball description of the 1986 Wimbledon quarter-  
final.

CRAIG

All I'm saying is you don't throw 25 years away like a  
pair of old socks.

LEANNE (O.S.)

Since when did you throw away your old socks?

(He looks at his feet)

LEANNE

It's over Craig.

CRAIG

I'll give up music for you.

(Elvira looks up in alarm.)

LEANNE (O.S.)

I have somebody else. I want to remarry ... - Craig?

CRAIG

(shattered)

I um...I didn't realise.

LEANNE (O.S.)

Keep your music, Craig. Have a good life.

CRAIG

(maudlin)

Goodbye, Leanne.

(then)

Oh, your car registration is due next month. I know you  
always forget.

(Craig hangs up slowly, broken.)

ELVIRA

You got any maple syrup?

CRAIG  
(annoyed)

No. And I don't appreciate strangers eavesdropping on my affairs.

ELVIRA

Sorry. Honey?

CRAIG

I don't know what your game is but if you don't go I will call the police.

ELVIRA

You're going to throw a starving, barely clothed fan out into a dangerous thunderstorm?

(Another loud clap of thunder)

CRAIG

What do you want? And don't mention any sort of sweet, viscous topping.

ELVIRA

What do YOU want?

CRAIG

You to leave.

ELVIRA

You don't want to be on your own wallowing in self-pity because your wife's about to tie the knot with another man.

CRAIG

Yes I do.

ELVIRA

No. You want to be a star. In 48 hours The King of Kings contest begins at the Casino: the greatest Elvires in the world on the one stage, fighting it out to be the ultimate Elvis. With my help you could be -

(she paints the sign with her hands)

ELVIRA

- The King of Kings.

CRAIG

I don't want to be King of Kings. I'm perfectly happy at the Ruxton.

ELVIRA

So how come you filled in the entry form? This is your chance to change your life. Unless you make the move now all that'll be waiting at the end of your rainbow is a meat tray.

CRAIG

My wife's divorcing me. What's the point?

ELVIRA

The point schmuckeroo, is you win King of Kings she'll be back panting on the doorstep like a bird-dog, smelling duck. She'll be scratching at the walls to get IN. Wearing a little off the shoulder negligee all sprinkled with sweet smelling perfume.

(Craig has almost been carried away by the image)

CRAIG

But she's going to get married.

ELVIRA

A 48 hour virus. She's met some guy, he's taken her to Sizzler and given her a red rose. You win this he'll be deader than the 78. Hey man, she doesn't want a beat up old Buick running on empty, she wants to stretch out in a Chevvy convertible with whitewall tyres a full tank of gas and ... a car radio. She wants the wind in her hair and beside her, at the wheel she doesn't want Mr Nobody, she wants Craig Nelson ... King of Kings.

(Craig almost goes with it but -)

CRAIG

Naaaa. I'm just a local cabaret act. We're talking the cream here. Some of these guys have worked with Maria Venutti. Lionel Colton once backed Dannii Minogue.

ELVIRA

But you have something special. I saw it at that club tonight. Eight bars into the first song they were all tapping their feet.

CRAIG

Impatience. Club Keno was on next.

ELVIRA

Garbage. Not one of them got up and walked out.

CRAIG

They were all in wheelchairs. Last April their coach was just out of Coffs Harbour, when a cyclone blew the peel off the Big Banana. When the Dunlops hit it was like skating on ice.

(sadly)

Nobody stays for my show, unless they have to.

ELVIRA

My old man was Elvis' most trusted bodyguard. Lived with him for years, like snot in a hanky. I can teach you stuff the others can only dream of: I can give you the lowdown on every move the King ever made.

CRAIG

Why do you care if I win?

ELVIRA

I care about talent. I care about guts, determination, commitment. I applaud passion.

CRAIG

That's crap.

ELVIRA

You're right. I made a bet with a guy. You don't win, my life's gonna be hell. What do you say?

CRAIG

If I'd started a month ago, maybe. It's on in 48 hours.

ELVIRA

With me coaching that is more than enough. Come on, Craig for once in your life take a risk.

CRAIG

What happened to your shoes?

ELVIRA

Flash flooding. Craig, a lifetime on your own, Or with Leanne. What's it gonna be?

CRAIG

Alright. I'll do it ...

ELVIRA

That's my ...

(Elvira puts out her hand to shake  
but -)

CRAIG

... if you show me you've got the goods. I mean, no offence but when it comes to music everybody thinks they're an expert. You show me you can at least hold a tune, I'm in.

(Elvira stares at him defiantly.  
Grabs a guitar from its rest)

ELVIRA

This is a little something I wrote.

(She strums, oo that feels good,  
like a part of her has been  
missing.)

**Song 2 FLAT BED FORD**

ELVIRA

I TOLD MY MAMA I WAS GONNA SHOOT SOME POOL SHE SAID "I  
NEVER THOUGHT I'D RAISE A DAUGHTER AS A FOOL" THE ONLY  
THING YOU'LL FIND IN BARS IS BELLIES, BULL AND BEER/ DON'T  
SHAKE YOUR HEAD CHILD LISTEN HERE. YOU WON'T FIND DIAMONDS  
IN A TEN CENT STORE BUT YOU WILL FIND TROUBLE IN A FLAT  
BED FORD

IN A FLAT BED FORD, GIRL GET CARRIED AWAY/ YOU'LL GO DANCING  
IN THE STARRY NIGHT AND WAKE UP WITH A FRIGHT IN THE HEAT  
OF DAY.

(Craig progressively becomes  
impressed)

ELVIRA

COURSE I NEVER LISTENED TO THE WORDS MY MOMMA SPOKE BY THE  
TIME I REMEMBERED MY HEART WAS BROKE BY A MAN WHO GAVE ME  
STRAW WHEN HE PROMISED SILK/ BUT I AIN'T CRYING OVER NO  
SPILT MILK/ I TOOK MY CHANCES, I CUT MY CORD AND I FOUND  
TROUBLE IN A FLAT BED FORD

I'VE BEEN TO LOUISIANA, TALAHASSEE, PASADENA, SAN JUAN AND  
SANTA FE, FORGET ABOUT LUCK WHEN YOU SEE THAT TRUCK, A  
GIRL CAN GET CARRIED AWAY, YEA MOM WAS RIGHT WHEN SHE  
SAID THAT NIGHT YOU WON'T FIND DIAMONDS IN A TEN CENT STORE  
BUT YOU WILL FIND TROUBLE IN A FLATBED FORD

IN A FLAT BED FORD GIRL GET CARRIED AWAY YOU'LL GO DANCING  
IN THE STARRY NIGHT AND WAKE UP WITH A FRIGHT IN THE HEAT  
OF DAY, IN A FLATBED FORD. IN A FLATBED FORD. IN A FLATBED  
FORD.

CRAIG

Wow.

ELVIRA

I'm a little out of practice. So, we have a deal?

CRAIG

We do.

(They shake)

CRAIG  
Oh, you feel like death warmed up.

LIGHTS OUT. END OF SCENE.

LIGHTS UP

CRAIG'S FLAT - A SHORT TIME LATER

(Craig in Elvis wig finishes a song with a flourish. Elvira has her head buried in her hands.)

CRAIG  
...Kentucky rain.

ELVIRA  
We're missing something here.

CRAIG  
More rhinestones?

ELVIRA  
Soul. You got no soul, Craig.

CRAIG  
I'm trying my hardest.

ELVIRA  
Yes, it's like you're reading the instructions on a flea bomb. And the smile, lose the smile.

CRAIG  
That's the Craig Nelson trademark, the pearly whites. That's why they come back to the Ruxton time and again. People don't like moody.

ELVIRA  
I like moody.

CRAIG  
Yes, but I'm the one who has done ten years straight at the Ruxton.

ELVIRA  
Exactly. Now listen, and watch. First you got to swivel.

(Craig tries swivelling, badly.)

ELVIRA  
Then there's the trembling knees...

(Craig is hopeless. She's angry.)

ELVIRA

I've seen better moves on a zimmer frame.

CRAIG

Okay, that's it.

(Craig opens the door to motion  
her out)

ELVIRA

You're kidding.

CRAIG

You come in here, eat my snaggers, criticise my smile,  
insult my knees. Well, you can torment somebody else with  
your so called "intimate Elvis knowledge."

ELVIRA

Yea, okay fine. Blame me. That's the easy way. You know,  
Elvis would puke if he saw you.

(She strips his wig. He points at  
the door.)

CRAIG

Now, please!!

ELVIRA

And that prancing...

(She imitates him.)

ELVIRA

No wonder Leanne ditched you.

CRAIG

That's enough.

ELVIRA

She got tired of your bullshit. The reek of the bain Marie  
that seeps into your skin like a broken sewer pipe. She  
wanted a life.

CRAIG

I gave her a life. She just didn't want me.

ELVIRA

(pleased)

Now that's what I've been looking for! You got more going  
on inside than a pot full of live shrimps. Get that emotion  
into song, you win.

CRAIG

You manipulated me.

ELVIRA

I know it's scary, man but that's what makes it real. You can do it. Now hit me, and not with any of that Ruxton crap. But with you, Craig Belson.

CRAIG

Nelson. Fine. Here's a song I wrote for Leanne.

SONG 3 TOO SCARED TO RUN.

CRAIG

WELL WE'VE CIRCLED ONE ANOTHER FOR AN HOUR AND WE'VE CONTEMPLATED MANY FUTURE SCENES/ LIKE DOING THINGS TO ONE ANOTHER IN THE SHOWER INVOLVING FLESH AND LIPS AND SOAP AND STEAM/ BUT THE PLACE IN WHICH WE SIT IS ALMOST EMPTY AND THE WAITER'S STACKING CHAIRS UPON THE BAR/ AND THOUGH WE'RE SAYING NOUGHT WE'RE THINKING PLENTY

(She joins in to his surprise)

CRAIG AND ELVIRA

LIKE DO WE DARE TO FIND OUT WHAT WE REALLY ARE. TOO SCARED TO RUN, TOO WEAK TO STAND TOO TOUGH TO FIGHT, LET'S ME AND YOU JUST CALL A TRUCE AND MAKE LOVE ALL NIGHT

ELVIRA

WHEN MORNING COMES THERE'S TALK OF GOIN' STEADY

CRAIG

AND CLOTHES ARE STREWN ALL ACROSS THE FLOOR

CRAIG AND ELVIRA

BUT THOUGH WE'RE BOTH AWARE THERE'S NOTHING THAT WE SHARE SOMEHOW WE NEVER MAKE IT THROUGH THAT DOOR

TOO SCARED TO RUN TOO WEAK TO STAND TOO TOUGH TO FIGHT  
LET'S ME AND YOU JUST CALL A TRUCE MAKE LOVE ALL NIGHT

ELVIRA

IN LIFE YOU RARELY MEET THE PERFECT PARTNER

CRAIG

OR IF YOU DO THE TIMING'S NEVER RIGHT

BOTH

BUT IT REALLY DOESN'T MATTER IF WE BOTH STAY OFF THE PATTERN  
CALL A TRUCE GET REALLY LOOSE MAKE LOVE ALL NIGHT.

(An instrumental chorus Craig steps  
out to the PRESENT)

CRAIG

It was as if I accessed a trapdoor into my soul that had been nailed shut. For the first time I felt alive and real and ... like I wasn't a hack.

(Resumes the song.)

BOTH

TOO SCARED TO RUN TOO WEAK TO STAND TOO TOUGH TO FIGHT/  
LET'S ME AND YOU JUST CALL A TRUCE MAKE LOVE ALL NIGHT.  
TOO SCARED TO RUN TOO WEAK TO STAND TOO TOUGH TO FIGHT ME  
AND YOU JUST CALL A TRUCE MAKE LOVE ALL NIGHT.

(tag)

BOTH

Let's me and you ... make love all night.

(Ends)

ELVIRA

I knew you had it in you. Why isn't that in your set?

CRAIG

I tried it once at the Ruxton they threw their dinner rolls at me, and believe me those rolls can bruise. Leanne was there actually.

ELVIRA

What did she say?

CRAIG

I'll never forget. She looked at me, there were almost tears in her eyes and she said "In the time you wasted on that you could have painted the pergola." That was fun but we both know, I'm no Elvis. Mind you I would have given anything to meet him.

ELVIRA

According to The old man you didn't miss much. He's just a singer who coincided with Brylcream.

CRAIG

Elvis was a genius. He gave us hope.

ELVIRA

You on crack? Your favourite Elvis song, what is it?

CRAIG

I don't know, Crawfish, maybe?

ELVIRA

Crawfish. Elvis had it in the can in 2 takes. By 3.00 am, he was woofing chilli dogs on Sunset. Elvis jangled heavy keys, grabbed a fist of hard chick-a-dee arse, spun his shiny pink convertible to a studio fuck-pads and spent the next two hours with one of the chorus girls - Deanne? Dolores? Started with a D. Long legs, high hopes, her skin is puckering all over.

(Elvira seems to gaze into a personal memory. Craig transfixed.)

ELVIRA

Tonight is why she caught the Greyhound six years ago. This is her one chance to wind up on Wiltshire with stone lions out the front and a 50 yard pool in back. All the dance classes, all the petty gropes in the back seat of studio flunkies' Oldsmobiles, just for this one roll of the dice. She doesn't know she's the third chorus girl The King has sampled since shooting began. For a moment when they're making love in that sweat-box room with the loud air-conditioning they really do connect. For a moment they are the Mississippi stretching across sheets like the wide continent itself. For an instant his heart and hers are the engines purring on gridlocked highways, their limbs the steel tracks that criss-cross America, their sighs the Santa Anna winds. Between bouts he clowns around in her stilettos. Around 10 next morning he calls her a cab. She leaves with the sour taste of bourbon in her mouth and promises herself she'll never brush those teeth again. That day on set, he never once glances her way. That's your "genius."

(Elvira sags, depressed.)

CRAIG

That's some bullshit your Dad made up.

ELIVRA

It's true.

CRAIG

Even if it was, that girl, Dolores, she's probably still dining out on the story.

ELVIRA

He used her.

CRAIG

You think she'd be better off if it never happened? If she spent her life ironing shirts for some schmuck. I mean, I've never known pain like Leanne leaving, but I cherish our time together. She's my life. Was my life.

(A strained silence. Elvira touches him in a comradely fashion.)

ELVIRA

What happened?

(Craig shrugs. No idea.)

CRAIG

I thought everything was going great. We'd do the plant nurseries Saturday, furniture stores Sunday, the local Rissole 3 times a week. It was a full-on relationship. Then one night I got back from the Ruxton and she'd packed her things.

ELVIRA

She must have said something?

CRAIG

I rang her at work, she wouldn't take my calls.

ELVIRA

You don't think she was ...

(She tries to draw it out of Craig but he is too dim.)

CRAIG

What?

ELVIRA

Sucking some guy's ...

CRAIG

Please. Leanne didn't really like sex. We didn't even do it for the three months before she left me.

ELVIRA

She didn't go on a diet, start wearing perfume, buy new clothes. Nothing like that?

CRAIG

No...well, she did come home one night with a tattoo on her left buttock: "I love Tim". But she gave a perfectly reasonable explanation.

ELVIRA

What reasonable explanation could there be for having "I love Tim" on your left buttock?

CRAIG

She said when she got enough money, on her right buttock she was going to have tattooed ..."Tams" You don't think there was anything ...

ELVIRA

No no no no no. Just my suspicious mind. You got any more of those hot dogs?

CRAIG

I can cook some up. Despite everything I'm feeling really good.

(Craig moves into the kitchen area and clicks on the TV. We hear -)

NEWSREADER V.O.

.... should be fit for the next clash. And there is still no news on that missing corpse that vanished from a Jonquil Rise undertaker's earlier today. The family of forty-two year old Lilly Gavranic is devastated. Lilly died from an asthma attack three days ago and had donated her organs.

(Craig glances up to catch the photo. He freaks pointing a raw sausage at Elvira.)

CRAIG

What the fuck!

(Elvira caught cramming Pringles in her mouth fights to kill the TV.)

CRAIG

That, that's you!

ELVIRA

I can explain.

(She heads towards Craig. He retreats.)

CRAIG

You're a zombie!

ELVIRA

I'm not a zombie.

CRAIG

You're cold as ice. That's why. Oh my God. I've been dancing with a frigging zombie.

(She nods at the raw sausage.)

ELVIRA

If I was a zombie would that help?

CRAIG

It might. A bit.

ELVIRA

Look, calm down. I'm not a zombie, I'm a ... ghost, a spirit. But I needed a body to inhabit for forty-eight hours that's all. I was desperate.

CRAIG

Who are you?

ELVIRA

Really, you have to ask? All those intimate details of Elvis.

CRAIG

You're Dolores, the girl from the motel.

ELVIRA

Not Dolores. I'm not the same sex I used to be.

CRAIG

The bodyguard?

ELVIRA

Not the bodyguard, Craig.

(Elvira strikes Elvis pose, 1,2.  
Craig still clueless. But then  
on the 3rd pose he finally  
understands.)

CRAIG

Nooooooooo!

ELVIRA

Yes, Craig.

LIGHTS OUT

CRAIG'S. LATER

(Craig still in shock putting it  
together)

CRAIG

Let me get this clear, you did die in 1977?

ELVIRA

Oh yea.

CRAIG

And now tonight after all that time, you have possessed Lilly's body.

ELVIRA

You got it.

CRAIG

I think this is the night I crack the Duck.

(Craig pulls the bottle down. She  
grabs it from him.)

CRAIG

You're a ghost, you don't need alcohol.

ELVIRA

Don't need it but I like the taste.

(Elvira takes a slug of Duck.)

ELVIRA

Arrgh. It's corked.

(Craig sips.)

CRAIG

No. That's how it always was. What I want to know, why now? Why me?

ELVIRA

To explain that I have to go way back. 1952. I'm a young buck driving trucks, singing a bit of rock a billy.

(ELVIRA PERFORMS **SONG 4 snakebite**)

ELVIRA

TELL YOU IN THIS WORLD TWO THINGS ARE ABSOLUTELY FATAL/  
ONE IS WOMAN ONE IS SNAKEBITE ONE IS SITTING AT MY TABLE/  
DO I HIT THE DECK A RUNNIN? OR TRY AND TEST HER CUNNING?  
DO I TRY TO RUN AND HIDE? DO I TRY TO STAY AND FIGHT? NO  
I DECIDE TO TRY AND LOVE AND RISK THE BITE. I'M GONNA  
LOVE YOU TONIGHT, I'M GONNA LOVE YOU TONIGHT IT'S A  
SNAKEBITE NIGHT, I'M GONNA LOVE YOU TONIGHT, I'M GONNA  
LOVE YOU TONIGHT AND RISK THE BITE.

12 BAR BREAK

I'M GONNA LOVE YOU TONIGHT I'M GONNA LOVE YOU TONIGHT IT'S  
A SNAKEBITE NIGHT I'M GONNA LOVE YOU, I'M GONNA LOVE YOU  
TONIGHT TONIGHT AND RISK THE BITE.

I'VE BEEN BITTEN ONCE OR TWICE SO I SET A BAD EXAMPLE THOUGH  
THE STING IS AWFUL NICE THE RULE IS FUNDAMENTAL, HIT THE  
DECK A RUNNIN' DON'T TRY AND TEST ITS CUNNING, DECIDE TO  
RUN AND HIDE DO NOT STAY AND FIGHT 'CAUSE ONLY FOOLS LIKE  
ME WILL RISK THE BITE.

I'M GONNA LOVE YOU TONIGHT I'M GONNA LOVE YOU TONIGHT IT'S  
A SNAKEBITE NIGHT, I'M GONNA LOVE YOU TONIGHT I'M GONNA  
LOVE YOU TONIGHT AND RISK THE BITE.

(ENDS)

(HORACE HAMMOND in a seersucker suit chomping on a cigar claps and ambles over.)

HORACE

Name's Hammond. Horace Hammond. Mighty fine show you got there boy.

ELVIRA

I thanked him.

HORACE

No need for that formality. I believe we're going to be intimately acquainted for many years to come. What you have here boy is a promising act that encroaches upon the dark areas of the human soul and that's my kinda territory. I wish to assist you in turning this promising but as yet nascent show into something more substantial. Let me put it this way, wall to wall pussy, a Cadillac made of solid gold with ... a car radio. And no shooting star, no supernova, no sir, but the biggest star of all time, in perpetuity. Bigger than Sinatra. Just sign the paper, boy, just make your mark.

ELVIRA

I was overwhelmed but I knew in my heart what was expected. I asked what Horace got out of it.

HORACE

Eighteen percent of gross. And your soul of course.

(Horace exits)

ELVIRA

I signed. Almost at once the ball started rolling. Record and film contracts, cars, women. There was no sign of Horace though and I told myself I'd imagined the whole thing. And then, oh I think it was during the shooting of Kid Galahad, there he was. He reminded me of our deal. I sought to renegotiate. "You can't renegotiate with the devil, boy" was what he said. That was the beginning of the end. I had turned my back on the maker who had given me this great gift, I had eaten the apple in the Garden of Eden and I choked upon it piece by wretched piece. Pills, booze and carbohydrates to keep the horror at bay. But impermanently. More pills, more booze. Death was welcome.

CRAIG

If all this is true, why aren't you in hell?

ELVIRA

I'm out on appeal. I went up before the big Tribunal. Marilyn Monroe represented me. She's in limbo too. Her case is looking good.

CRAIG

Marilyn Monroe?

ELVIRA'S VOICE

Oh yes. You've probably sat next to her on a bus or something. You can always tell, she laughs like a choir of angels, tossing her head back and lightly touching her brows. You'll know if you ever come across her.

CRAIG

So, um, what were the grounds of your appeal?

ELVIRA

I was young, confused.

CRAIG

Oh come on.

ELVIRA

It's the best we could do.

CRAIG

Where was your guardian angel when all this was happening?

ELVIRA

Trying to control Jerry Lee Lewis.

CRAIG

Temporary insanity?

ELVIRA

With Jerry Lee I think it's permanent.

CRAIG

No. I mean, as a mitigating plea.

ELVIRA

Tricky. Anyway, all that's by the by. Yesterday in arbitration Horace Hammond offered double or nothing. The deal was he could choose a task I had to complete within 48 hours. If I accomplish that, he gives me back my soul.

CRAIG

And if you don't?

ELVIRA

Level ten. The most tormented section of hell with Jeffrey Dharma, Adolph Hitler, constant re-runs of the The Partridge Family.

CRAIG

So, how do I come into it?

ELVIRA

Don't take this the wrong way. My task was to get you to win King of Kings.

(It sinks in)

CRAIG

That's the most difficult task the devil could think of?

ELVIRA

Don't take it personally.

CRAIG

He could have asked you to put together a lounge room suite of Ikea furniture with nothing but an Allen key, but no, get Craig Nelson to win King of Kings. The prick.

ELVIRA

He liked the irony.

CRAIG

The arsehole.

ELVIRA

You wouldn't be the first to say it.

CRAIG

That duplicitous sulphurous cloven hooved Bealzabub!

ELVIRA

Well, you're certainly the first to say that.

CRAIG

So, let me get this right. If I win, you get your soul back, if I lose ...

ELVIRA

I'm like disgusting foul smelling chilli squid for Eternity.

CRAIG

You're in deep shit.

ELVIRA

What? No! I believe in you.

CRAIG

You're only saying that because you're stuck with me.

ELVIRA

Uh uh. I admit when I saw you at The Ruxton, I was thinking barbecued ribs, mine, but I know you can do this. What do you say?

CRAIG

I'd be honoured. And -

(Reprise Snakebite)

BOTH  
 I'M GONNA LOVE YOU TONIGHT I'M GONNA LOVE YOU TONIGHT I'M  
 GONNA LOVE YOU TONIGHT AND RISK THE BITE.

LIGHTS OUT

END ACT I

EXT. A PIER - NIGHT

(Craig and Elvira sit eating pies.)

CRAIG

So there's Leanne and me in this kitchen showroom because Leanne wants the best crushed marble from some village in the Dolomites - anyway. The salesman is giving his spiel showing us this cooking range the size of the Bismark.

ELVIRA

Gas or electric?

CRAIG

Both.

ELVIRA

Tubs for deep frying?

CRAIG

You better believe it.

ELVIRA

Sensational.

(Enjoying the pie)

ELIVRA

Yum - man they had these in Memphis I never would have got into pills.

CRAIG

So there we are, Leanne's drooling over this cooker, when my stomach starts growling like a Doberman. I'm almost doubled over.

ELVIRA

I been there.

CRAIG

I have to get to a dunny. And fast. I make some excuse peel off and just when I think seepage is about to happen - I find the toilet. Big room, spotless.

ELVIRA

Oh shit, I can see it, the boss'?

(Craig holds up a finger - wait.)

CRAIG

I just get the strides down and boom - out she comes. You can't believe how relieved I am. And then - I hear voices.

ELIVRA

You're tripping!

CRAIG

And the wall peels back -

ELVIRA

Mushrooms, someone's fed you mushrooms!

CRAIG

No, what someone fed me was an old Chiko roll from the servo and the wall actually does peel back and I'm confronted by this geek in a shirt and tie and a couple with three children staring at me with my pants down. I'd accidentally gone into a display toilet. I've never shared that with anyone. Not even Leanne.

ELVIRA

Well I feel, privileged.

CRAIG

(suddenly sombre)

Now my whole life's down the toilet.

ELVIRA

Bullshiiiiit! Look at this. The ocean, the moon, a mouth-watering pie, this is life. This is precious. Don't ever regret you're alive Craig. Not for one single second.

CRAIG

It's hard. Everything reminds me of her. The moonlight that revealed a beautiful stranger in the crowd. Royal Easter Show nineteen seventy-two. Ten rubber balls thrown, ten skittles smashed. A kewpie doll gift that led to the most wonderful time of my life.

ELVIRA

That's so romantic. You giving her the doll you won.

CRAIG

Oh no, she won the doll. I was sick as a dog. I pigged out on everything in the Cadbury's, Rowntrees and Nestles bags then went on the Wild Mouse. And now all that means nothing. It's gone. So quick.

(CRAIG PERFORMS SONG 5)

IN THE TWINKLING OF AN EYE.

CRAIG

In the twinkling of an eye, Fire swept our place I shoulda seen it coming, should've recognised her face/ Now I'm standing in the ruins, Of what was once my pride And the love I thought was mine has died In the twinkling of an eye. We met at seventeen Some accidental thing/ I took you to a movie But we didn't watch the screen/ And we walked the late streets hand in hand And I held you to my side And that is how we fell in love In the twinkling of an eye

In the twinkling of an eye your whole life's written In the merest flash of time every line forgotten/ I thought we would last eternity/ We were special you and I But all that died In the twinkling of an eye

In the twinkling of a eye Fire swept our place I shoulda seen it coming/ Should've recognised her face/ But I guess I was distracted And there were things that I'd neglected And our unprotected loved just died In the twinkling of an eye.

In the twinkling of an eye your whole life's written In the merest flash of time every line forgotten I thought we could last eternity We were special you and I But all that died In the twinkling of an eye In the twinkling of an eye

(Elvira comforts)

ELVIRA

Let's get back and get down.

(They move off together)

INT. CRAIG'S FLAT - LATER

(Craig and Elvira in high spirits.)

CRAIG

They used to have special Elvis nights at the drives. Completely stunted my sexual development.

ELVIRA

What?

CRAIG

I copied you. You used to kiss like this, right?

(demonstrates, eyes closed, lips puckered)

CRAIG

I didn't know about opening my mouth. One night during *It Happened At The World Fair*, I had a blocked sinus. I held the kiss too long and passed out through lack of oxygen.

ELVIRA

That was a good one to pass out in.

CRAIG

Fortunately that was my first date with Leanne. She stuck the tongue in during mouth to mouth and we never looked back. Great times. Crazy bunch. Anna Gertin, tried to straighten her hair with sticky tape, Johnny Jensen, who dumped you for Del Shannon, Tim Spiramadiadis, my best mate, he'd bring the beers and Oh my God!

(A moment of  
realisation)

She never had the Tams put on.

ELVIRA

Mmmm?

CRAIG

Leanne. She never had the Tams put on.

(bitter laugh)

I've been an idiot. She's going to marry Tim Spirimadiadas. They must have been having it off when Leanne was still living here.

(The facts make  
sense now)

It was just after Leanne landed a job at Tim's Real Estate agency that she got the tattoo. Then she started working back late.

(with decision)

Oh well, that's it. There's no point doing King of Kings.

ELVIRA

So there's a 'gator in the bayou. Man, you got to fight for treasure. It's even more important now you win this thing.

CRAIG

I've been cuckolded for Godsake!

ELVIRA

That's something to be ashamed of?

CRAIG

Like somebody cut your lunch.

ELVIRA

True story. We were both just 16. Her hair was yellow as a Burger King corn-cob, eyes green as peppermint cream, lips red as ketchup. Her wealthy family disapproved of this full-lipped half-breed, but her love was bright and constant as the sun. It was a Sunday. I ran fast along the dirt track that wound down through brambles to our secret place, my heart pounding at the expectation of her lips, my hands, reeking with the smell of Mama's leather bible I'd been holding but an hour before, aching in anticipation of tracing the curves of my young love's breasts. Voices floated up to me from the swimming hole below. I recognised her laugh, light and sweet as magnolia blossom. I pushed aside branches... The white buttocks of Chip Beauregard Guthrie, star quarterback, were pumping against her golden skin, as if two thick blobs of cream had been dropped over a perfectly cooked waffle. Thinking she must be the victim of his attack, I ran to defend her honour but over Guthrie's shoulder, her cloudy eyes caught me, and stopped me dead. They pleaded for an understanding that was beyond my years. They pleaded with me to turn around. Through tears I stumbled back. Brambles cut me, I did not feel them. The real pain was the knowledge that my love, so freely given, had been rejected as unworthy.

CRAIG

What did you do about it?

ELVIRA

The only thing I could. I sang.

SONG 6 LUV THAT SOUND

ELIVRA

Sound the horn, shut the barn, now the sun's gone down,  
grab the car your ma and pa are heading into town, there's  
a bar where they play guitar we have a beer and leap around,  
the banjo sings, the fiddle swings, oh I how I love that  
sound,

I really love that sound, I really love that sound, I'm  
never ever ever down because I love that sound.

ELVIRA

Iron that shirt,

CRAIG

Pleat that skirt,

BOTH

Shine your dancing shoes

ELVIRA

We've worked all day,

CRAIG

Earned our pay

BOTH

And now we're cutting loose there's a bar where they play guitar we have a beer and leap around, the banjo sings, the fiddle swings, oh I how I love that sound, I really love that sound, I really love that sound, I'm never ever ever down because I love that sound.

CRAIG

I love the fiddle when it makes that locomotive sound.

ELVIRA

I love the banjo when it growls, I love the guitar when it howls,

CRAIG

I love the band pass the hat around

BOTH

And don't let 'em stop until the sun comes up because I love that sound I really love that sound, I'm never ever ever down, I'm never ever ever down down because I love that sound.

(SONG ENDS)

ELVIRA

See Craig, music is the best cure in the world. Come on, let's knock over a couple more songs over then catch some zeds, we got a big day ahead of us.

LIGHTS OUT.

CRAIG'S FLAT - LATER

(Elvira is asleep. No sign of Craig. HORACE HAMMOND enters and smiles at the sleeping Elvira.)

HORACE

I was about to say "Hello, boy" but I see that salutation would be inappropriate.

ELVIRA

(mumbles)

Hi Horace.

(What! She sits bolt upright.)

ELVIRA

What the hell are you doing here?

HORACE

Hell is my bailiwick and my prerogative. Friendly visit. By the looks of it, your arse is already toast.

ELVIRA

Horseshit. You're in more trouble than a martini in Dean Martin's fist. And you know it. We're going great guns.

HORACE

I'll admit that boy of yours is doing better'n expected, but he ain't past the post, not by a long score. He could get a cold, the flu...

ELVIRA

He's strong and healthy.

HORACE

He's up against some awesome talent.

ELVIRA

Do I look worried?

HORACE

I have an offer. We call off the bet. I'll give you level 2.

(Elvira demurrs)

HORACE

That's big jump from 5. There's plenty of spunky kittens. It's a little warm, it smells a bit but so does Bali.

ELVIRA

You're worried or you wouldn't be here. What's your best offer?

HORACE

Level 2 for 3,000 years moving up to Level 1. Practically air-conditioned. This is my last offer. It's 1 or 10, and you know what 10's like: drowning in a cesspool every second for the rest of your eternal life.

ELVIRA

I have to think about it.

HORACE

It's now or never.

(Elvira pauses, looks back offstage in the direction of Craig, takes in the monumental decision)

ELVIRA

Level 1, from day 1. And Extreme sunscreen at all times.

HORACE

Level 1 from Day 1 and Sunscreen 55 plus.

ELVIRA

Extreme.

HORACE

Alright. You got yisself a deal. I'll see you in hell boy.

(Horace laughs as he leaves.)

Reprise Love That Sound

ELVIRA

(mournfully)

I love that sound, I really love that sound I'm never, ever, ever down ....

(Craig enters full of beans)

CRAIG

Okay, I'm ready to roll.

(smells Horace's presence)

Pooo...those pies really don't agree with you.

ELVIRA

The stink is Horace Hammond. I just renegotiated our deal. I drop this King of Kings stuff, I get level 1. It's a deal I can't refuse. I'm sorry.

CRAIG

You did a deal?

ELVIRA

Craig, please. I couldn't have done it without you. I'm really grateful. There was no choice.

CRAIG

There is a choice.

ELVIRA

You don't understand.

CRAIG

Oh I understand alright. You come in here, build me up, pretend you're my friend, then when the heat's applied you wimp out.

ELVIRA

Buddy we're talking hell!

CRAIG

You had extraordinary talent. You were magnetic. I've had a lifetime playing to people who'd rather stare at wallpaper. You didn't have to sing Why Was She Born So Beautiful, smiling week after week into the mouths of gummy Grandmothers. You didn't have people yelling at you to pipe down so they could watch the races on the bar TV, or audition to be the singing horse in the baked bean fart ad. I did. AND I didn't get it. So I think I know plenty about hell. I don't want my own jet, invites to the opening of Planet Hollywood, well maybe nobody does, I just want to sing the best I can. For better or worse. YOU showed me that, goddamit.

ELVIRA

I can't take that risk. You can still enter. You can still win.

CRAIG

Oh yes, I can see you think so. Get out.

ELVIRA

Craig...

CRAIG

Go.

(She exits. He calls after her)

CRAIG

I don't need you.

SONG 7 I DON'T NEED YOU

CRAIG

I don't need you now. I got TV. Don't need your sweet red lips that only lie to me, won't miss your perfume neck or your angel's laugh, I'm the CEO of my desire and I don't need no staff. Sure there's things I'll miss, that midnight kiss, that burns so deep down to my soul and makes me lose control but I don't need you now, I've a telephone, and friends to call just gonna wait a while till they get home, see I got TV and some books to read, so don't flatter yourself girl you're what I need, okay I'll miss your touch, and the way you shake your hair but not that much, no I don't care, I won't miss your skin, cool beside me, 'cause I think I mentioned I got friends and I got TV. I don't need you now, I'll be fine alone, cause I got a big TV and a telephone.

(He slumps into a chair. Dejected.  
The doorbell rings. He leaps up.)

CRAIG

I knew it. It was a motivational ploy.

(He runs out. There is a pause.  
Then we hear his amazed greeting  
offstage)

CRAIG (O.S.)

Leanne? This is a pleasant ...

(Leanne enters in corporate wear  
followed by Craig. She turns her  
nose up at the flat.)

CRAIG

I've been rehearsing.

LEANNE

For The Young Ones?

CRAIG

Would you like a coffee?

LEANNE

Thanks. Strong black. Java.

CRAIG

I've only got instant.

LEANNE

Whatever. Ugh, those awful wedding photos.

(Leanne takes in the house.)

LEANNE

You could do something with this place. Freedom lounge  
suite, Freedom cushions, some nice little Freedom lamps.  
An armoire.

CRAIG

Freedom?

LEANNE

Don't be ridiculous Craig, Freedom don't make armairs.

CRAIG

So, what are you doing here? Papers I have to sign?

(Leanne confronts him, ready for a  
tin-tacks discussion)

LEANNE

Look, we've both been guilty of playing silly games. I'm prepared, if you are, to let bygones be bygones.

CRAIG

I don't follow. What are you saying?

LEANNE

Christ Craig, let's forget the divorce, and give it another shot.

(Craig is stunned. In a valve release, Leanne swings back to appraise the surrounds)

LEANNE

And boards. Nobody has carpet anymore. Boards, low gloss. With some rugs. I got to thinking about us, old times. That kewpie doll you spewed over. We didn't do all that badly did we?

CRAIG

We did great.

LEANNE

So, what about it? We give it another go?

CRAIG

Yes, sure...I mean...what about Tim?

LEANNE

(shocked)

How long have you known?

CRAIG

I only realised last night.

LEANNE

What can I say? It happened. I'm not proud of it, but I'm not ashamed either. After my interior design and real estate course, things changed. I changed. I mean, it's probably hard for you to understand but just the smell of a Mitre 10 catalogue turned me on. And I suppose Tim exploited that. He's rich, good looking, has bagged plaster walls, everything I thought I wanted. I AM sorry I deceived you. I tried to tell you ages ago. But every time I got close you'd break into Speak To The Sky.

CRAIG

There's something you're not telling me.

LEANNE

True. If this is going to work we need complete honesty. Last night, when Tim found out I was getting a divorce, he blew up. Hit the roof. He doesn't want marriage, a future.

(Craig a silent "Yes" of triumph)

LEANNE

He kicked me out. Like that. I thought I'd reappraise my life, spend some time in the wilderness but I couldn't get a seat to Adelaide, and as I was waiting at the taxi rank for a car driven by somebody who wasn't a foreigner, I kept thinking of you. It must have been those daggy songs they play through the p.a. Anyway, here I am. You give up your music, I'll give up Tim, we can be a team again.

CRAIG

I give up music?

LEANNE

You suggested it. And that's what started the rot. I think we can make this work Craig but it's me or the music.

LIGHTS OUT

CRAIG'S FLAT - LATER

(Wearing ear-phones CRAIG sits testing the strength of a rope humming I DON'T NEED YOU NOW. He loops the rope around his neck. We hear a sudden pounding on the outside door.)

ELVIRA'S VOICE

Craig, open up, it's me.

(Craig looks up in surprise as Elvira bursts in. He pulls out his ear-phones)

ELVIRA

Craig, please. Don't do it. I've been so stupid. There I was standing in line for my last ever bacon double cheese burger with coke, when it hit me like a big ol' summer twister. Horace wants you to take your own tragic life. He'll get two souls for the price of one. All I could see in my mind was your poor unsightly, pathetic body at the end of a rope. But I'm here now. And I'm not leaving.

(yells)

Hear that you sulphorous scumbag Horace! I'm NOT leaving! The deal is off!!!

(she calms down turns back to Craig and indicates the rope.)

ELVIRA

There. Now get any thoughts of killing yourself, right out of your head. Right out.

CRAIG

I'm hanging Leanne's favourite cushion - Freedom. It's symbolic. I always hated her cushions.

ELVIRA

You are not going to kill yourself?

CRAIG

Absolutely not.

ELVIRA

What if Leanne doesn't come back?

CRAIG

She came back. I told her, no.

ELVIRA

Hey, just because she slept with somebody...

CRAIG

It wasn't that. It just wasn't right. I told her she only wanted me because she was insecure, tomorrow she'd probably meet somebody else who digs jarrah as much as she does.

ELVIRA

And you won't change your mind? You won't wake up tomorrow and think, "topping time?"

CRAIG

No.

(a considered pause before Elvira frantically shouts)

ELVIRA

Horace! Horace the deal's back on.

CRAIG

That's pathetic. I can win this, I know that now.

ELVIRA

You're right. Yes, of course you are.  
(yells again)

Horace!!!!!!

CRAIG

Horace totally snowed you, man. You would have been just as big without him.

ELVIRA

I was playing carnivals in Moose fart next minute I'm a huge star.

CRAIG

Because you spoke to us. Every guy in every dumb factory, setting type or feeling his palm burn as the drill bit, every girl stacking shelves or punching tickets on a bus, every little band who saved their dollars to cut a demo and mail it off into the ether knowing somewhere at the other end it would most likely wind up in a dust-bin but maybe, just maybe it might not. Without you there's no Beatles, Jagger, no Jimmy Morrison, Van Morrison, no Lou Reed, the Godzillas of our lives. People say it woulda happened anyway. I don't believe that. You were the big bang of popular culture, man, the oceans, the mountains, the deserts and it didn't come from Horace fucking Hammond it came from those bar-b-cued ribs wrapped in newspaper Vern lay down on the table of your tar-paper shack, from your Mother's love for you and vice-versa, it came from your humanity and your ... your ability to transcend all that, to give us the fucking cosmos in a groove of wax. And you're going to do a deal? YOU DON'T DO DEALS YOU'RE THE KING. You've only got one life to live and life can be rough but if you live it every day, all the way, once is enough.

ELVIRA

Was that from "Spin Out"?

CRAIG

Kissin Cousins. Well?

(Elvira with decision)

ELVIRA

Baby you're so square but I don't care. Brush the dust off your blue suede shoes. Tonight we're taking care of business.

song 8 RUDE CRUDE HOME BREW BOYS

CRAIG&amp;ELVIRA

We're rude crude, home brewed, roll spit tobacco and chew boys/ Just bad, mad lads in a bar with a jar and a pool cue/ Low dollar, blue collar, laugh dance holler and handsome/ Be your friend amen to the end extend it and then some/

ELVIRA

We're riggers and diggers and wheelers and dealers we're good guys

CRAIG

Love our hogs and our dogs and our cars and the stars in the night sky/

BOTH

And you know that you count on us, when the chips are down  
we make are the downs go up We're rude crewed, home brewed,  
roll spit tobacco and chew boys.

ELVIRA

We're the feet on the beat of a street near you,

CRAIG

The hands Of the man who shapes and screws

ELVIRA

Drives the van of the band to Kalamazoo

BOTH

Five star four star three star two and if you ever need a  
helping hand or a little bit of understand you'll find it  
in the space on the bar beside the jar between those rude  
crude, home brewed, roll spit tobacco and chew boys.

(BREAK)

We're rude crude, home brewed, roll spit tobacco and chew  
boys Just bad, mad lads in a bar with a jar and a pool cue  
Low dollar, blue collar, laugh dance holler and handsome  
Be your friend amen to the end extend it and then some And  
rest assured that we will be deployed in every bar from  
Witchita to illinois We're rude crewed, home brewed, roll  
spit tobacco and chew boys. Just rude crewed, home brewed,  
roll spit tobacco and chew boys.

LIGHTS OUT

BACKSTAGE AT THE CASINO - NIGHT

(Craig paces, moaning, to the sounds  
of an awaiting crowd. He is  
dressed for performance)

ELVIRA

Relax. Do what I always did. Just imagine that mike is a  
big, juicy hamburger.

CRAIG

It's not that. I'm never going to see you again. Even if  
I win. I don't want to lose you.

ELVIRA

It's my time, Craig.

CRAIG

I'll be all alone.

ELVIRA

I'll always be there for you, just like you were there for me. Be cool.

CRAIG

Be crazy.

CRAIG

I sort of feel I should kiss you. You think that would be wrong?

ELVIRA

I am in a woman's body.

(They move together for the kiss,  
then -)

CRAIG&amp;ELVIRA

Naggh

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

And now our final contestant, number 35, Craig Belson.

ELIVRA

Nelson.

Song 9 THE KING AND ME

CRAIG

My life was heading for a worthless wreck A total mess  
what-the-heck Then I heard his voice and I came to believe  
So it began the King and me. I was on my knees and my  
heart was broke Had the blues And had no hope Then I heard  
the music from this 45  
And I came alive, The King and Me

(Elvira watches, excited and proud)

CRAIG

His smooth voice soothed me so in the lonely nights  
 His fast moves thrilled me  
 Made everything alright  
 He swung that guitar lethal  
 Like a gattling gun  
 He played music with his soul gave the kiss to rock'n'roll,  
 Took the blues and holler And he made it fun My life was  
 heading for a worthless wreck  
 Total mess what-the-heck Then I heard his voice and I  
 Came to believe  
 So it began the King and me His  
 smooth voice soothed me so through lonely nights His fast  
 moves thrilled me made everything alright He swung that  
 guitar lethal  
 Like a gattling gun  
 He played music with his soul gave the kiss to rock'n'roll,  
 Took the blues and holler and he made it fun. Took the  
 blues and holler and he made it fun. Took the blues and  
 holler and he made it fun.

(Song ends)

ANNOUNCER

Ladies and Gentlemen, by unanimous decision the winner,  
 and King of Kings, our last contestant number 35, Craig  
 Nelson.

(Wild applause. Craig drinks it  
 in. Elvira whistles and applauds  
 side of stage and then collapses.  
 Craig runs to her.)

CRAIG

No. I need you.

ELVIRA

No you don't, Craig. You're doing just fine.

CRAIG

Please, stay a bit longer.

ELVIRA

It's time.

SONG 10: DON'T GO

ELVIRA

I'll be there for you, with a heart that's true, Darling can't you see? This ain't no fantasy, we did it you and me. You have touched my soul, but the bell has tolled, together we inspired, we burned within with fire, but now I'm not required. I'll be there for you with a heart that's true. Darling can't you see? This ain't no fantasy, we did it you and me.

(Music underscores)

ELVIRA

I can feel it all, Craig, flowing through me like a fast stream, the sun beating down on the Chattahoochie, boys with their shirts off diving into the wide-watering hole bursting with dreams, Anne Margaret's red lips moving round a tootsie-roll, President Nixon's b.o. up close, old Scotty Moore, thumping those strings, I can see you Mamma...I can feel it all Craig, all the beautiful horror and pleasure... Old Horace Hammond is not very pleased, I can tell you. You look after yourself you hear. Say Hi to Marilyn if you bump into her. I got a feeling she'd like you.

(She leaves)

CRAIG

I'll be there for you with a heart that's true, darlin' can't you see, this ain't no fantasy, we did it you and me.

PSYCHIATRIST OFFICE

(Back where we started)

CRAIG

And that's what happened, doctor, I swear.

PSYCHIATRIST

Craig, please, just cop to interfering with a corpse. You won King of Kings, it's great publicity. You can be a star, a real star.

CRAIG

I don't need that. I lived my whole life just wishing I could hear Elvis sing live. I got a whole 48 hours of it and he loved me. And respected me. And when the King is on your side nobody else counts.

PSYCHIATRIST

If that's the way you want to play it. You're a sick person, Craig Nelson. You are going to require intensive one on one therapy for say, oh 5 years or so.

(SHE DOES THE MARILYN MONROE GESTURE  
LAUGHING AND THROWING BACK HER  
HEAD.)

Marilyn? CRAIG

LIGHTS OUT

SONG 11: KING AND ME REPRISE

CRAIG  
My life was heading for a worthless wreck A total mess  
a what-the-heck Then I heard his voice and I came to believe  
So it began the King and me.

ELVIRA  
I was on my knees and my heart was broke, Had the blues  
And had no hope Then I heard the music from this ol 45  
And I came alive, The King and Me

CRAIG  
His smooth voice soothed me so in the lonely nights His  
fast moves thrilled me  
Made everything alright He swung that guitar lethal  
Like a gattling gun  
He played music with his soul, gave the kiss to rock'n'roll,  
Took the blues and holler, And made it fun. Took the  
blues and holler, And he made it fun, Took the blues and  
holler and he made it fun, took the blues and holler and  
he made it fun.

(LIGHTS OUT- THE  
END)