



Preview Script

“Country Love”

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Country Love

By Gary Swartz

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COUNTRY LOVE:

the cheatin'
lyin' hurtin'
cryin' musical!



(Or an evening of entertainment with two people who
don't really like each other very much!)

Book and lyrics by Gary Swartz
Music by Victor Wells and Grant Milliner

THE CAST

Tammy Lea - A female Country and Western singer known as The Cryin' Cowgirl. She is in her mid-to-late 20's, dressed in gloriously overdone Country and Western glitz. She is taping a show for cable television. Essentially, through a combination of talent and circumstances, she is a woman who at long last is content, if not happy, with the circumstances of her life and will do whatever it takes to maintain and improve upon the fame, fortune and success she is enjoying -- even if it means lying outrageously. Some of this happiness and deceit should shine through the aura of bitterness she projects.

Vern - A customer in a C&W Karaoke bar in his late twenties or early 30' showing early signs of dissipation. He is slightly overweight and unsuitably dressed in tight western wear. During the play he will grow gradually more inebriated and speak and act accordingly. His singing skills are semiprofessional and he awkwardly mimics the presentation of a more polished singer.

The Band - Tammy's band. (Also doubles via the magic of theatre as the Karaoke bar house band. One member is also the Club Announcer.) This could be a keyboard player with suitable bed tapes, or, ideally, 4 or more musicians. Tammy Lea should ideally sing with back up singers/dancers but could do with none. Her numbers should be staged with showy routines, etc. The musician(s) should change hats -- cowboy to baseball - put on jackets, or do something to indicate they are a different band playing in a different venue as appropriate. There should be a concert like feeling to Tammy's performance. Vern's are looser, occasionally bad.

TV Show Announcer - An off stage voice heard at the opening of the play on tape.

THE PLACE

The center of the stage holds the band on risers. Above them are two large signs which should be illuminated as appropriate. One reads 'LIVE AND INTIMATE' in a cable TV show style. Ideally it is neon. The other is tacky (painted on brown paper) and reads 'LIVE KARAOKE - OPEN MIKE'. It must be made clear that despite using the same musician(s), these are different venues.

The rest of the stage is propped as appropriate with flats painted in a light-hearted, rather loose, high school Sadie Hawkins dance type style intended to represent:

Stage right -- a TV set made to look like a dressing room. There is a TV camera (without an operator) and a single spotlight which will illuminate Tammy when she is on camera. There is a chair that Tammy Lea will sit in and speak from as if to the camera and a TV audience. Off-camera is a make-up table with a large mirror. A monitor TV faces the audience. On ON-AIR sign illuminates when appropriate.

Stage left -- the inside of a large road house or honky tonk showing tables, patrons, etc. There is a sign that says LESTER'S HONKY TONK and a large photo of Tammy Lea with a sign that says 'ORIGINAL HOME OF TAMMY LEA, THE CRYING COWGIRL'. Up stage is a bar as seen from the bartender's perspective. Vern will sit on the customer side of the bar and speak across it to the audience as if to a bartender.

MUSICAL NUMBERS

Act 1

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------|
| 1) Shoulda | Tammy |
| 2) Broken Heart Attack | Vern |
| 3) A Heart Can't Be Fixed With A Kiss | Tammy |
| 4) Mr. Right | Vern |
| 5) Country Love (Chorus only x 3) | House Band |
| 6) It Works For You And Me | Tammy |
| 7) If I Knew Then What I Know Now | Tammy |
| 8) Dawg | Vern |
| 9) Hang Me Out To Dry | Tammy |

Act 2

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| 10) Country Love (All) | House Band |
| 11) Tried And True | Tammy |
| 12) I Can't Resist | Vern |
| 13) Devil Got His Due | Tammy |
| 14) What's A Poorboy To Do | Vern |
| 15) Did We Really Try Our Best | Tammy |
| 16) Over Again | Vern |

ACT 1, SCENE 1

TV Announcer *(Studio stage illuminated, band on stage, tinny over-miked voice)* Ladies and Gentlemen, please welcome to Live and Intimate, the television show where the rising stars of Country Music sing it like it is, and tell it like it is, The Crying Cowgirl herself, Miss Tammy Lea. *(Canned applause)*

Tammy *(Tammy Lea climbs on stage. Excited)* Are you ready for some New Country music? I sure am. This is really a dream come true. *(Breath)* And I'm about as nervous as a mailman at a dog show. *(Pause, deep breath)* If you know a little about my life and career, this is the song I pawned my engagement ring to record, and had my regional hit on that got me my major label deal. And ladies, if you'd like to sing along on the chorus, it's real easy to remember - *(sings a cappella)* But shoulda... just ain't gooda.... enough. Ready boys, hit it.

Music #1 – “Shoulda”

Tammy *You shoulda been mending fences
Tending to business
Full of affection
Paying attention
You shoulda been head over heels
And said what you feel
But shoulda, just ain't gooda - enough*

*Yeah love is more than kisses
It's all that little stuff
A man who doesn't keep his word soon finds
That times are tough*

*You should have been holding my hand
Being my man
Made a big deal that our love was real
Shoulda been head over heels
And said what you feel
But shoulda, just ain't gooda - enough*

*Yeah love is more than kisses
It's all that little stuff
A man who doesn't keep his word soon finds
That times are tough*

*You shoulda been straight from the heart
Doing your part
Stalwart and true not making me blue
Shoulda been head over heels
And said what you feel
But shoulda, just ain't gooda - enough*

*Yeah love is more than kisses
It's all that little stuff
A man who doesn't keep his word soon finds
That times are tough*

*You shoulda been mending fences
Tending to business
Full of affection
Paying attention
You shoulda been head over heels
And said what you feel
But shoulda, just ain't gooda - enough*

*No shoulda, just ain't gooda enough
Shoulda ... Ain't gooda ... Enough*

(Blackout)

ACT 1, SCENE 2

Club Ann'e'r *(Bar illuminated, Vern sits at bar)* Ladies and Gentlemen, once again, it's Live Karaoke Night at Lester's Honky Tonk. If you don't know how it works, just write your name on a piece of paper with the name of the song you want to sing and give it to me. If we know it, we'll play it. If it's got more than three chords, we'll fake it. Now please welcome one of our regulars, Mr. Vern Jackson. *(Bar to black, stage illuminated, Vern moves to stage)* Folks, take my word for it, when Vern sings Broken Heart Attack, he knows from where he sings. No one lets his broken heart - all hang out - like our Vern.

Vern Evening friends. I'd like to dedicate this song to my wife, Tammy Lea.

Music #2 – “Broken Heart Attack”

Vern *I'm at the tavern at the mall
I think I'll stay in case you call
I'll probably drink a beer or two
Just to toast the love we knew
I'll ask the band to play our song
And ask myself where we went wrong
And why the promises we swore
Don't mean a thing to you no more*

*Set 'em up and toss 'em back
Another broken heart attack
I need a killer for my pain
The kind that goes straight to the brain
Just make it whiskey, rye or gin
To help me drown the state I'm in
Until you say you're coming back
Another broken heart attack*

*You said your love was strong and true
That no one else but me would do
I put a ring upon your hand
We bought a house a piece of land
And then you threw it all away
Though I begged you dear to stay
But you just walked on out that door
And said you won't be back no more*

*Set 'em up and toss 'em back
Another broken heart attack
I need a killer for my pain
The kind that goes straight to the brain
Just make it whiskey, rye or gin
To help me drown the state I'm in
Until you say you're coming back
Another broken heart attack*

*I'm at a table at the back
All dressed up in basic black
I wear my heart upon my sleeve
I never really thought you'd leave
Now Jim Beam's my only friend
My life has reached a sorry end
The lady that I love is gone
A man is weak that once was strong*

*Set 'em up and toss 'em back
Another broken heart attack
I need a killer for my pain
The kind that goes straight to the brain
Just make it whiskey, rye or gin
To help me drown the state I'm in
Until you say you're coming back
Another broken heart attack
Until you say you're coming back
Another broken heart attack*

Vern

(Puts mike back on stand) Thank you. Thank you. What's that. *(Puts hand to ear)* I believe I hear my beer calling me. Vern. Vern. I'm lonely. Lonely. Don't I know the feeling. But if you folks'll have me back, there's more tunes where that one came from. *(Taps hand on heart. Leaves stage. Bar illuminated, Vern goes to bar, there is a glass of beer and a shot glass of whiskey on it, he picks up shot glass salutes it, pantomimes talking to someone behind the bar, half sings)* "A killer for my pain, The kind that goes straight to the brain." *(He tosses back the shot, breathes, speaks in a normal voice)* I needed that. Not that drinking helps. Nothing does. But we try. We try. Oh, that's right, being new here, you don't know who I am. The name's Vern. Vern Jackson. If my wife's the Cryin' Cowgirl, I'm the Hurtin' Husband. The guy who woke up to discover how little he counted. How little he really meant to the woman he loved. *(Drinks beer)* But the last thing you want is some guy sitting at your bar telling you his troubles. Now, you will have to put up with my singing on Karaoke Nights. But, hey, it could be worse. I'm a good tipper. Just keep them beers coming. And steer all the pretty ladies my way. *(Looks back over his shoulder points to a table)* Well, except that one. We're already way too well acquainted. If you know what I mean. *(Spots and points to poster of Tammy Lea on the wall)* Oh. And that one. The nasty one with her picture up there on the wall. Not that we'll see her around here again soon. *(Sips beer)* Word of advice. Word of advice. Don't believe anything that woman says. 75% is lies and the rest is pure, unadulterated bull. *(Sips beer. Laughs. Looks at poster)* The Cryin' Cowgirl. The Cryin' Cowgirl. You want to hear a good one. They ought to call her the Lyin' Cowgirl. *(Turns back to face audience)* Yep. That's my Tammy. The Lyin' Cowgirl. *(Drinks beer)* Or maybe just the lyin' cow.

(Blackout)

ACT 1, SCENE 3

Tammy

(Studio stage illuminated, Tammy on stage) Before I sing "A Heart Can't Be Fixed With A Kiss", I'd like to thank the Country Cable Channel for inviting me to appear on Live and Intimate. I really appreciate this wonderful opportunity to spend some time, with you, my fans. I'd especially like to welcome our studio audience. Come on. Give yourself a nice hand. *(Encourages theatre*

audience to applaud) Come on. Come on. I hope you enjoy tonight's show. I know when I was just plain Tammy, I used to watch Live and Intimate all the time. It meant so much to hear the stories behind the songs and to learn how others had suffered in their relationships, like I was suffering in mine. How they learned to be strong and learned from their mistakes, like I learned from mine. I hope I can share some of that with you tonight. I'd like to also thank my wonderful fans whose love and support helped me through a very troubled time and who put A Heart Can't Be Fixed With A Kiss in the top 10 for three weeks. Three wonderful weeks. In fact, its because of you, these days I like to say, *(smiles and exaggerates)* it only hurts when I sing. *(Blows a kiss)*. Ready boys.

Music #3 – “A Heart Can't Be Fixed With A Kiss”

Tammy *Mama, my heart has been broken
It ain't gonna heal with your kiss
There's no way to make it get better
Than to be with the one that I miss
Mama, I thought it was real
I'd found me the man of my dreams
But nothing brings achin' like the day you awaken
To learn love ain't all that it seems*

*No this time there's no getting better
There's no way to help me with this
Your little girl's learnin' a lesson 'bout living
A heart can't be fixed with a kiss
No my heart can't be fixed with a kiss*

*Mama, my heart is in pieces
Like a mirror you drop on the floor
A thousand reflections to help me remember
My lover won't be back no more
Mama, I don't know what happened
I thought I'd found love that would last
'Til the day I discovered he'd found another
And our love was over too fast*

*No this time there's no getting better
There's no way to help me with this
Your little girl's learnin' a lesson 'bout living
A heart can't be fixed with a kiss
No my heart can't be fixed with a kiss*

*No this time there's no getting better
There's no way to help me with this
Your little girl's learnin' a lesson 'bout living
A heart can't be fixed with a kiss
No my heart can't be fixed with a kiss*

*No, this heart can't be fixed with your kiss
No, this heart can't be fixed with your kiss
This heart can't be fixed with your kiss
No, this heart can't be fixed with your kiss*

Tammy *(Leaves stage, stage to black, set illuminated, walks to set, points at camera, pantomimes to someone off camera)* I just look at the cameras and talk. About anything. My life. My career. If I make a mistake, you edit it out. That sounds easy. Just let me fix my face. I'd hate to look bad for my fans. *(Vainly checks face and hair in mirror, takes seat, waits)* I wait for the cue. *(Red recording light on camera/on-air sign lights, pantomimes receiving a cue)* Hi. This is the part of the show they call Intimate. Where we country stars reveal all our little secrets. *(Laughs ruefully)* Don't I wish I still

had a few. *(Holds up a tabloid with her face on the cover, headline reads "ELVIS FATHERED TAMMY LEA" reads from inside pages)* Listen to this. "According to sources... Tammy Lea is Elvis's secret love child." Sources? Source is more like it. I'll bet they've been talking to Vern, my ex. He'll make up anything. He'll say anything. He sells used cars. You know the kind. One step above a politician. Two steps above ... *(Looks at tabloid again, laughs)* ... the people who write this stuff. At the very least, this week they could have let me be the one abducted by aliens. And Elvis could have been... Michael Jackson's father. *(Pause)* Well, I guess he kind of already is, father-in-law, anyway. Or was. But you know what I mean. All I know is, the last thing I need is more man trouble. Even this kind. In fact, I put my show together tonight to help tell my story. *(Twists hanky, gets serious)* It began with Daddy. *(Looks at tabloid again)* My real Daddy. He moved out when I was 12 and left Mama to raise me and my sister on her own. You can imagine what life was like for a single mother in a one industry town. I used to keep a scrap book full of pictures from Better Homes and Gardens and the movie magazines. I'd look through it and try to imagine what it would be like to have things, *(pause and emphasis)* new things, but mostly to have a father who cared. I dreamed about what it would be like when I got married and had a family - a little boy and a girl of my own. How they would be surrounded with love. *(Beat)* Not to say that Mama didn't love us. Or that we didn't love her. We did. We did. And bless her, she did her best. And her best was good. She was firm but fair. She wouldn't let me go steady until I was 16. I never even really fell in love until I was 18. 18. That's when I got engaged the first time. *(Pause)* You know *(acts like she just realized something)* that was when I gave up my dream of becoming a singer. Before that, I sang in the glee club. With the church choir. Around the house. To records and the radio. *(Laughs)* I used to pretend the DJ was saying my name. Tammy Lea. Then love took over my life. At 18. *(Pause)* Believe me girls, that's too young. You have to learn who are first. Then you can find yourself a man. An honest man. But at 18, you think you know it all. I did. And I was so in love. So magically in love. Steve, my fiancée, was like ... a beautiful love song. You know the kind that comes into your head, and your heart. You hum it all day. You dance to it. Then... suddenly no more horse drawn carriage... the clock strikes midnight. Out of the blue, Steve said it was over. He didn't love me anymore. He didn't even try to give me a reason. It broke my heart. I thought I'd never get over it. I cried and I cried. Two years of my life... gone. Just gone. That's why I feel so strongly about "A Heart Can't Be Fixed With A Kiss". It says how badly I felt then. How no one can really help. How you swear you'll never let it happen again. But you do. Oh, you do. And it does.

(Blackout)

ACT 1, SCENE 4

Vern *(Club stage illuminated, Vern on stage)* Me again. Come on folks, I know we've got more good singers out there. But since I'm here, I'd like to do one of those songs they don't write anymore. And dedicate it to you and me and all the people who woke up one morning to find out they were politically wrong. It's called Mr. Right. Boys, hit it.

Music #4 – "Mr Right"

Vern *Girl, if you don't mind my saying
This could be your lucky night
After all your empty searching
Here stands your Mister Right
My arms were made for loving
And my kisses made to please
You could search the wide world over
Guys like me don't grow on trees*

*Yes I'm everything I seem
From this black stetson hat
To these faded old jeans
So come on give us a kiss
It just doesn't get*

*Any better than this
It just doesn't get
Any better than this*

*Now, if you're thinking what I'm thinking
This could be your lucky night
A little taste of heaven
In the arms of Mister Right
A lover like no other
Truth is simply told
Darlin' when they made me
They threw away the mould*

*Yes I'm everything I seem
From this black stetson hat
To these faded old jeans
So come on give us a kiss
It just doesn't get
Any better than this
It just doesn't get
Any better than this*

*The man of the hour
For each wildwood flower
Sugar and spice and everything nice
Two loving arms and a movie star's charms*

Vern Thank you. Thank you. And ladies, I meant every word of that song. (*Leaves stage*)
Club Annce'r Let's hear it for Vern. (*Induces applause from the audience*) If you folks want more of Vern don't be shy about yelling out and letting me know. We can always count on Vern to, shall I say, be entertaining. Speaking of entertaining. It's our turn. Here's a little song I wrote called Country Love. Any resemblance to folks living or dead (*emphatically*) I assure you, and Vern, is completely coincidental.

Music #5 – “Country Love”

Band *One pound of cheatin', one cup of lyin'
Handful of hurtin', bucket of cryin'
There's no denyin', no point in tryin'
What they got cookin' is country style love (fade under/out)*

Vern (*Stage to black, bar illuminated, Vern at bar*) That's what I call a good song. Mr. Right. A picture of me before I met (*sarcastically*) Miss Tammy Lea. (*Points to poster*) Before I got married. Those were the days. No wife expecting me home every night. Women not afraid of a bit of recreational sex. No one had heard of AIDS. No recession. Cars selling like crazy. Not like now. And no wife meltin' down credit cards like there's no tomorrow. Although that's not a problem anymore. And no bank breathing down your neck. Hell, I'm turning things around. It takes time. By the way, I own Heritage Ford. (*Takes card from shirt pocket*) Here's my card. (*Puts card on the bar*) If you ever need a car, I'm the man to see. I'll give you a deal. Best deal in the three counties. We'll fix you up with something fast and flashy. Young guy like you. You'll be fighting the women off. Take it from someone who knows. Women like a car, and a man (*grabs crotch*), with plenty under the hood. Hell, that's what got to Tammy in the end. (*Bar to black*)

Tammy (*Studio set illuminated, Tammy in chair*) When Steve broke our engagement, I was working at the bank until he finished college and I could be a housewife full time. Suddenly, instead of my white picket fence, my two kids, my loving husband, moonlight and a porch swing, there was this won't-take-no-for-an-answer jerk, who had been hitting on me at the bank. Vern. My ex. I think he saw my engagement ring as a challenge. You know how some men are. I made it quite clear I just wasn't interested him. But he kept after me. I remembered him from high school. His Daddy owned the Ford dealership. So he always drove something better than the other guys.

"Fast and flashy' is how Vern would describe it. A lot of girls thought that made him some kind of stud. *(Sarcastically)* Like the kind of car a man drives says something about the man. Ladies, let me tell you, muscle cars are high maintenance, low reliability, and they never go far enough on a gallon of gas. Like the men who own them, if you know what I mean. Believe me, I learned the hard way. *(Studio to black)*

Vern *(Bar illuminated)* Tammy was a teller at my bank. Engaged to some college jerk. He was going to be a rich lawyer. Thought she had it made. *(As in commercial)* Gravy Train. Hell, he only came back to town on weekends, so I asked her out a few times. A pretty face and a great body shouldn't go to waste. Not if I can help it. She wouldn't give old Vern the time of day. But you can't let "no" stop you, not if you want to close that sale. Sure enough, this fiancée gets wise. *(Confidentially)* I heard from a friend of a friend he'd found some girl who could 'further his career'. What a Yuppie. You make your own way in this life. Like I did. Anyway. Suddenly Vern didn't look so bad to *(sarcastically)* Miss Tammy Lea. Oh, not right away. In fact for a month or so after the big break up, Tammy was so teary-eyed and washed out, I thought the bank might have to fire her. I sure as hell didn't want to bank with her, let alone date her. Then she pulled herself together. She actually asked me if I still wanted to take her out. I had my doubts. But I figured it would be therapeutic. You know public service. Charity. I mean women like me. They like to be with me. I know what to do. What to say. How to please them. Give them a thrill. I figured it would be good for Tammy. Just what she needed. You know Dr. Love. The medicine man. But Tammy had other ideas. Oh, she didn't mind going out with me. Didn't mind dinner and dancing. Flowers and jewelry. But she didn't want to sleep with me. Claimed she'd been hurt. Felt vulnerable. Needed time before she could trust a man. Before she could get intimate. Intimate! I just wanted to sleep with her. Give her a good time. Give her what she needed. *(Confidentially)* What most women need. Anyway. Getting back to flashy cars... see there's a point to my story... in the end I let her borrow a demo from the lot for a few days. Mustang. 5 litre. Convertible. It even had a CD player. Some women think they're better than others. Women are all the same. All the same. *(Bar to black, stage illuminated)*

Band *(fade in and up)* One pound of cheatin', one cup of lyin'
Handful of hurtin', bucket of cryin'
There's no denyin', no point in tryin'
What they got cookin' is country style love *(fade under/out)*

Tammy *(Stage to black, studio illuminated)* When Vern noticed the ring was gone, he found out when my birthday was and bought me a dozen roses. It was embarrassing. I mean with his reputation. And it was sweet at the same time. What girl doesn't like to receive flowers. Especially if she's a romantic. And I am a romantic. *(Confidentially like to a really close confidant)* Would you believe in high school I even tried to write a book report on a Harlequin romance? My teacher wasn't quite as impressed by counts and barons from vague European countries as I was. I still am to tell the truth. I can't wait for my first European tour. Who knows ladies, maybe dreams do come true? Anyway, I said I'd go out with Vern. Just once, I told myself. Just to be nice. Was I naive? We made a date for tennis on a Saturday afternoon. Tennis. Something safe. Vern at one end. Me at the other. And a net between us. *(Studio to black)*

Vern *(Bar Illuminated)* To be fair, Tammy was different than the other girls I'd known. She had a quality about her, an inner... an inner... how can I describe it? People seem instinctively to like Tammy. I guess she makes them feel like, like she likes them. It worked on me. And things happen around her. Like the service in restaurants gets a bit classier. At parties, the more popular people seem to gather around her. Men... and women. So it ain't a bad feeling to be with her. Tell the truth, I miss it. Tell the truth. I miss Tammy. Period. Sometimes at night I reach out for her, and... You know. *(Pause)* I miss it. *(Gestures to imply sex)* Miss her being there. I miss the good times. We had a lot a laughs. Hell even she admits it. How's that song of hers go.

Band *(A cappella)* Our love can blaze like a fire
In the stillness of the night
Our love is more our love is less
Than we thought love could be
Our love is what we made it
It works for you and me

Vern Yep. Sometimes, especially before we got married, it felt like we had the world by the tail and we were never going to let it go. *(Drinks beer)* Yeah. Before we got married. *(Bar to black)*

Tammy *(Set illuminated)* Vern was so different from anyone I'd ever known. He wanted to experience life. All of it. And he wanted me to experience it. He'd drive for two hours just to try out some new restaurant. And he could talk about things. No matter what it was, Vern had an opinion. But he was always careful to ask me what I thought. Salesman's patter I learned later. And he did it with everyone. But he somehow made it so personal. Almost intimate. And he filled this huge emptiness to overflowing. Before I knew it, we were going steady. No one could believe it. I couldn't believe it. I must admit that I was warned. Lord knows I was warned. *(Studio to black)*

Vern *(Bar illuminated)* You ever been married? Let me give you some advice. People talk bad about used car salesmen. But there are laws about what we can do to make a car look better. Woman are under no such obligation. I mean, ask a woman why she wears make up, she'll tell you it's to make herself look pretty for the men. Truth is it's to hide the fact that she's got something to hide. Or plenty. Tammy sure did. But once they get that ring on your finger, the gloves come off. *(Sips beer, laughs a bit)* Of all people, I should have seen through it. But Tammy seemed so.. so innocent. You know. Naive. Fresh. I really thought she liked me for who I was, not because I had money, not because I was a, well I guess the word is, stud. *(Sips beer)* Yeah, I really thought she loved me. All the time she was playing me for a sucker. I'm not ashamed to admit it. We all make mistakes. I did some things I shouldn't have. But I never pretended to be something I wasn't. Not like Tammy. With me what you see is what you get. How can anyone complain about that? *(Bar to black)*

Tammy *(Stage illuminated)* Vern can be so obnoxious. I really wish there was a way you could meet him. *(Laughs softly)* And I thought he might change. I thought that love would change him. My love would change him. Ladies, that was one tennis game that ended love nothing. *(Studio to black)*

Vern *(Bar illuminated)* Now Tammy, the truth is Tammy's a very deceptive person. Totally mercenary. Totally programmed. Like, you know, those TV wrestlers. *(A new awareness)* Yeah, Tammy Lea is the Hulk Hogan of Country Music. But it's an act. All an act. And that garbage she feeds to the tabloids. You'd think we were Bert and Lonnie. And the way she makes it sound like it was months and months from when we started dating 'til we went to bed. I admit, it wasn't right way. But it wasn't months. And in the end, what did it cost me, a couple gallons of gas and she jumped into bed. Jumped. That famous broken heart and all. And she was glad to be there. Now if I'd been smart it would have been love her and leave her. Hell, I had everything I wanted from her. But like I said, we all make mistakes. *(Bar to black, stage illuminated)*

Band *(fade in and up)* *One pound of cheatin', one cup of lyin'*
Handful of hurtin', bucket of cryin'
There's no denyin', no point in tryin'
What they got cookin' is country style love *(fade out)*

(Blackout)

ACT 1, SCENE 5

Tammy *(Studio stage illuminated, Tammy on stage)* This is a song about love, the physical part, and how it blinds you. How it makes you see things, feel things and believe things, that aren't really there. I hope you enjoy it.

Music #6 – “It Works For You And Me”

Tammy *Our love can blaze like a fire*
In the stillness of the night
Our love can turn as cold as ice
When we have had a fight
Our love is more, our love is less
Than we thought love could be
Our love is what we've made it
It works for you and me

*My friends all say that I'm a fool
To stick it out with you
They tell me that I should be free
I've better things to do
But freedom isn't worth a lot
To one who lives alone
We've both been down that road before
Finally we've come home*

*Our love can blaze like a fire
In the stillness of the night
Our love can turn as cold as ice
When we have had a fight
Our love is more, our love is less
Than we thought love could be
Our love is what we've made it
It works for you and me*

*My friends tell me that I'm a fool
To waste my life on you
They tell me that you're using me
That you cannot be true
They may be right, they may be wrong
But I will risk the fall
It's better to have loved and lost
Than not have loved at all*

*Our love can blaze like a fire
In the stillness of the night
Our love can turn as cold as ice
When we have had a fight
Our love is more, our love is less
Than we thought love could be
Our love is what we've made it
It works for you and me*

*Our love can blaze like a fire
In the stillness of the night
Our love can turn as cold as ice
When we have had a fight
Our love is more, our love is less
Than we thought love could be
Our love is what we've made it
It works for you and me
Our love is what we've made it
It works for you and me*

(Blackout)

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ACT 1, SCENE 6

Vern

(Bar illuminated, Vern at bar) So why did I marry Tammy? I've never been so physically satisfied in all my life. We seemed to fit together like a – hand and glove. And once I got her in bed, it was like Tammy had something to prove about being a woman. Ever had a woman like that? You want to try it some time. And me. My hormones were ruling my brain. *(Sips beer)* Isn't that why most guys get married? Or marry the wrong person. How's that song go, lose our heads over a piece of tail. With me and Tammy Lea, she started staying over at my place. Emptying ashtrays.

Getting me beer when we were watching TV. You know, all the comforts of home. It got to be that when she wasn't there, I missed her. Convinced myself she loved me. That she cared. That she'd make a good wife. A good house wife. Then one night, after maybe three or four days without seeing her, without getting any, I asked her to marry me. Believe me. She couldn't say yes fast enough. *(Finishes beer)* I could use another one of these. And get one for yourself!

(Blackout)

ACT 1, SCENE 7

Tammy *(Studio set illuminated, Tammy in chair)* It would be easy to say I married Vern because I needed to prove I could hang on to a man. You know someday, *(smiles)* someone's going to invent an aerosol spray that smells like stale beer, sweaty socks and makes a snoring sound when it comes out of the can. Husbands will be obsolete. The truth is I said no to Vern the first time he asked me to marry him. I mean I loved him. The problem was I wasn't sure Vern really loved me. To be perfectly honest, even then, I wasn't sure he wouldn't cheat. And I was right. He couldn't be faithful. But Mama was pushing me. My friends were all getting married. And I was overwhelmed by everything. Vern was so attentive. So needful. It's nice to feel wanted and to hear that you are wanted. And Vern could be so romantic. So Harlequin. Baron von Vern. Bringing me flowers. Little gifts. Taking me dancing. He even talked about our going places, like on a cruise. What woman wouldn't have been overwhelmed?

(Blackout)

ACT 1, SCENE 8

Vern *(Bar illuminated, Vern returns from off stage to bar doing up his fly)* They ought to do something about the smell in that men's room. If I didn't know better, I'd say Tammy was keeping it clean. *(Sits)* So where was I? Ah! So what the hell. Tammy and me got married. That's when I met her family. Not a particularly impressive bunch of folks. One of those family trees where half the relations are still swinging from the branches. You know real kissin' cousins. A sister married to some bum. No money. Imagine, her sister's husband tried to hit me up for a couple hundred bucks at the wedding. That I paid for. I realized then how much Tammy had gained by hooking up with me. Damn it. Tammy married well and she should have been grateful. Appreciative. Maybe her mother's kiss couldn't fix her damn broken heart, but my damn money sure did.

(Blackout)

ACT 1, SCENE 9

Tammy *(Studio stage illuminated, Tammy on stage)* This song is for wives who get left too much on their own. Who fill their days with too much Oprah while their husbands fill their evenings hanging out with the guys, *(bitterly)* or cheating, and their weekends with the NFL or the NHL or the NBA or the You know the kind. *(Deep male voice)* "I'd love to talk to you honey, but the retired hockey players invitational basketball tournament semifinal pre-game shootout is on. Try me Monday." *(Normal voice)* Well try this.

Music #7 – “If I Knew Then What I Know Now”

Tammy Your socks and dirty sweat shirt
Are lying on the floor
Right there where you tossed them
When you came in through the door
The supper that I cooked you
Is still sitting in the pan
You said that you'd eat later
Had a meeting with a man

*This ain't the life that I dreamed of
Not the way it's meant to be
I'm supposed to honour you
While you cherish me
No, this ain't the life that you promised
When we swore our vow
We never would have married
If I knew then what I know now*

*You call me from some roadhouse
Say you're drinking with the guys
My heart wants to believe you
My mind tells me its lies
You sit by that damn TV
With the volume turned up loud
Never thought the day would come
When two felt like a crowd*

*This ain't the life that I dreamed of
Not the way it's meant to be
I'm supposed to honour you
While you cherish me
No, this ain't the life that you promised
When we swore our vow
We never would have married
If I knew then what I know now*

*I'm sure you can't imagine
What it's like for me all day
Watching Phil and Oprah
And the folks they bring my way
The problems that upset them
Seem to look a lot like mine
If I tell the world about you
Think you could find some time*

*This ain't the life that I dreamed of
Not the way it's meant to be
I'm supposed to honour you
While you cherish me
No, this ain't the life that you promised
When we swore our vow
We never would have married
If I knew then what I know now*

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(Blackout)

ACT 1, SCENE 10

Vern

(Bar illuminated, Vern at bar) Tammy tries to make her life with me sound like some kind of hell. You've heard her songs. If anyone was wronged, it was me. But nobody wants to hear my side of the story. How she changed. Hell, the first thing she did after we got married was ask me to hire a housekeeper. I'd just married one. Someone should write a song about her kind of wife. Like she says I was never home at night. In my business you have to socialize after hours. You can't go straight home every night. It's men stuff. But some women just don't seem to understand. Tammy for one. That wasn't the real problem. It's hard to get excited about a woman when she hasn't

changed the sheets on the bed for over a week. When there are two days - a week's - worth of dirty dishes in the sink. And her cooking. Hell, you know how I could tell she wanted me to take her out for dinner. I couldn't smell anything burning. Some wife. Some life. Tammy married me for my money. She couldn't wait to quit her job at the bank. Then she expected a free ride. She didn't have a clue what it meant to be a wife. Or a homemaker. Even worse, within a year or so of the wedding she put on at least 8 pounds. 10 pounds. Closer to 15. Who wants to be seen in public with a woman like that. *(Turns to look at poster)* Though you wouldn't know it to look her today. She's got a smart manager. Tough. But smart. Oh, he's made a few mistakes with her career, but he didn't waste any time putting her on a diet. What's that commercial say. Image is everything. I got photos of Tammy in a two piece bathing suit when she was over-weight. Great camera angle. And one of these days, when the time is right I may make a little sale to the National Enquirer. Just to teach her two can play her dirty little game. *(Sips beer)* Besides, what the hell, if she's making money singing songs about me, why shouldn't I make a bit off her.

Club Anne'r Please welcome back to the stage, Mr. Vern Jackson.

Vern Wait 'til you hear this next one. I could have written it. *(Bar to black, stage illuminate, Vern goes to stage, takes mike)* I'd like to dedicate this song to Tammy Lea. It's called Dawg. It's about how life can be a bitch. Bitch. How women change. Nag. Come down on a man's friends. His habits. His natural born pursuit of happiness. On behalf of abused husbands everywhere, I'd like to thank the guy who wrote it.

Music #8 – “Dawg”

Vern Think it's time to walk with my dog
Think it's time to talk with my dog
Go down by the stream and pull up a log
And have a heart to heart with my good old dog
Cause he don't care that I'm stinking of beer
He won't call me a fool and say don't you get near
And if it happens one more time
It's the end of the line
Yeah, I think it's time to talk to the dog

*This married life can get a man down
One minute you're a hero the next you're a clown
You drinks too much and works too little
You're too rough around the edges and too soft around the middle*

*Think it's time to walk with my dog
Think it's time to talk with my dog
Go down by the stream and pull up a log
And have a heart to heart with my good old dog
Cause he don't care that I'm stinking of beer
He won't call me a fool and say don't you get near
And if it happens one more time
It's the end of the line
Yeah, I think it's time to talk to the dog*

*This raising a family can drive a man crazy
One kid's too loud and the other kid's lazy
The wife blames you for every little flaw
Just like your ma blamed you on your pa*

*Think it's time to walk with my dog
Think it's time to talk with my dog
Go down by the stream and pull up a log
And have a heart to heart with my good old dog
Cause he don't care that I'm stinking of beer
He won't call me a fool and say don't you get near*

*And if it happens one more time
It's the end of the line
Yeah, I think it's time to talk to the dog*

*These in-law relations can get under your skin
Her brother loses his job the whole family moves in
They eat you out of house they eat you out of home
'Til you start to tell yourself you'd do better on your own*

*Think it's time to walk with my dog
Think it's time to talk with my dog
Go down by the stream and pull up a log
And have a heart to heart with my good old dog
Cause he don't care that I'm stinking of beer
He won't call me a fool and say don't you get near
And if it happens one more time
It's the end of the line
Yeah, I think it's time to talk to the dog*

I think I should have married my dog

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(Blackout)

ACT 1, SCENE 11

Tammy *(Studio stage illuminated, Tammy on stage)* Here's a song a lot of women have told me they identify with. Even a couple of men. I hope you enjoy it. It's called "Hang Me Out To Dry". Ready boys.

Music #8 – "Hang Me Out To Dry"

Tammy *You got that look in your eyes
That smile on your face
That says you are itchin'
To get out of this place
To where the neon is bright
On the dark side of town
The perfect place to meet with friends
Just to hang around*

*I hear that motor racing
In your polished pride and joy
You don't treat me half as good
As you do that darn toy
It's even got a special place
Down at your favorite spot
Though it's never there too long
I drive by there a lot*

*Knowing later you'll come home
With that smile in your eyes
That says you've strayed across the line
No matter how you tried
'Til you notice I'm so full of tears
I might finally say good-bye
And you'll spin another line
And you'll hang me out to dry*

*You'll just spin one of your endless lines
And hang me out to dry*

*Once again I stand here crying
By your picture on the wall
Saying I may leave you
This time for once and all
Just pack my things and slip away
To some unknown place
Far from the lyin' in your eyes
And cheatin' on your face*

*Knowing later you'll come home
With that smile in your eyes
That says you've strayed across the line
No matter how you tried
Til you notice I'm so full of tears
I might finally say good-bye
And you'll spin another line
And you'll hang me out to dry
You'll just spin one of your endless lines
And hang me out to dry*

Tammy

(Stage to black, set illuminated, Tammy to chair, sits) "You'll just spin another line and you hang me out to dry." Isn't that the truth. *(Pause)* I think one of the hardest things to do is admit that a relationship has failed. We talk about the lies lovers tell lovers. *(Shakes her head)* It's the lies we tell ourselves that do the most damage. I told myself that if I worked at saving our marriage, I could do it. It really takes two. But it's so easy to keep hope alive. To see only what you want to see. To ignore the things you don't. Like the scent of a perfume that isn't yours. It took a lot for me to realize that my white picket fence wasn't a love nest. It was a trap. The picture perfect home I'd made meant nothing to Vern. It had come to mean nothing to me. My dreams had become a nightmare. I was alone. Alone without love. My girl friends all had husbands and families of their own. Normal marriages. They talked about things, diaper services and formulas, problems I only wished I had, and we drifted apart. Like Vern and I were drifting apart. I realized one day that all my hopes were ashes. My marriage a hollow sham. I had a husband who was never home. Who lied about where he was. Who he was with. And Vern, Vern had a wife...
...who needed a life. Deserved a life. Yes. Deserved a life. So I told him I wanted to go back to work. When we got married, Vern made me quit my job at the bank. One of those stupid male ego things. *(Smiles)* Are there any smart male ego things? Don't the words 'male' and 'ego' alone say it all. Do you have to even add stupid? Vern wanted none of it. It turned into a real screaming match. No wife of Vern's was going to work. No woman was going to criticize his lifestyle. Tell him what to do. What was good enough for his mother, was good enough for me. *(Pause, shakes her head)* I remind him how it had been when we were dating. We did have some good times. I reminded him of his promises. We never did go any further than the state capital except on our honeymoon and he golfed every day. I reminded him about the Baron. The flowers. The soft words. Dancing. Simple things like walking by the lake at night. Courtship, he called it. A ritual. I told him "Divorce is a ritual." He was shocked. It never occurred to him that a woman would actually want to leave him. I might want to leave him. Suddenly he was all apologetic and said that we should start doing things together again. He promised we'd go out at least once a week. We'd have dinner someplace where there was dancing. We'd talk about our problems, like having a baby. He knew before we got married how much I wanted a family. I still do. Of course, now, it would be hard, with my career, on the road and all. I don't know. Maybe someday. First I'd have to find a man I could trust. And once bitten. *(Pause)* Twice bitten. It scares me to think how easily I took Vern at his word. You know how to tell when a man is lying. His lips will be moving. I can't believe how easily I believed that things would get better. That man was the best used car salesman in three counties. But it's so hard not to hope.

(Blackout)

ACT 1, SCENE 12

Vern

(Bar illuminated, Vern at bar) As dumb as it seems, I look forward to Karaoke night. Therapeutic. What a surprise the first time Tammy got up on that stage. Even that first night, I knew the girl could sing. I mean I heard her sing around the house enough so it wasn't like a surprise. But suddenly everybody knew. And liked it. Especially that damn band. That damn guitar player. Made sure to invite her back. So we started coming in regular. Once a week. Our Thursday night date. A date, with the wife. I had to date my own wife. Anyway the word got around. More and more people started showing up. Unfortunately, a few people I'd have preferred stayed elsewhere showed up too. That's what ruined our marriage. The word got to Tammy that some of those nights I was out late playing cards with the guys, they weren't exactly guys, if you know what I mean. And the game wasn't exactly five card stud. More like Vern the Stud. Hell, we all do it. Or try. What is it they call a man who's faithful? A monotonist. No thank you. Not me.

(Blackout)

END OF ACT ONE - INTERVAL

... the rest of the musical has been removed from this Preview Script ...

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