

Pap Rose 1

AND SCAT RIGHT BACK TO MY PAPPY'S FARM
AND LEAVE THE HONKY TONK BLUES
YEAH THE HONKY TONK BLUES

SAY NOW LORD I GOT 'EM. I GOT THE HONKY TONK BLUES.

MAMA LILLY. (*Divvying up the profits.*) That's four bucks and a quarter, boys.

HOSS. That's all?

MAMA LILLY. Apiece.

JIMMY. Man, oh man, oh man.

MAMA LILLY. Ain't bad for no Friday night. We gonna do better tomorrow.

JIMMY.

I'M GONNA —

JIMMY and HOSS.

TUCK MY WORRIES UNDERNEATH MY ARM

(*Hoss puts his arm around Jimmy as they sing. Jimmy whacks him with his blackjack.*)

HOSS. Ow! Son of a bitch, that hurts!

MAMA LILLY. (*To Hank, who has cracked open a beer.*) One beer and that's it, Skeet! I don't want you crappin' out. (*She gets in the car, in the driver's seat. Hank speaks to the boys.*)

HANK. You don't know ol' Skeet. He don't have just one.

MAMA LILLY. Come on, boys, back home!

HANK, JIMMY and HOSS.

OH LORD I'M SUFFERIN'

I GOT THE MAMA MAMA MA BLUES

(*Everyone piles into the car. Beers are popped open amid tired laughter and celebration.*)

PAP. They were wild, those honky-tonk kids, but the roughness never bothered me. That's where the music was. Most of the world had never heard of this folk or hillbilly music, as they were proud to call it. I was a songwriter myself. Left Chicago some time ago, took a wrong turn in Ohio and ended up in Nashville where I set up the Acuff-Rose Music Publishing Company.

My dissatisfaction with Tin Pan Alley music became clear to me as soon as I heard these boys and others like 'em. Their music wasn't written, it was born. And where Hank Williams was concerned, it was as natural as breathing. (*Hank and Tee-Tot make contact from their opposite sides of the stage. They sing quietly to each other, echoing and responding.*)

He had those eyes that translated everything into emotion. And when it was mixed with that darkness inside, it created — we call it country-western today, but the blues is what it was. The hard-time Southern blues.

The sound was different, I suppose, from what use t' be called "race music," but the heart was the same. An echo of something that came from so far back in

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the woods, so deep in the ground, that maybe you couldn't put a name to it, but you surely couldn't help responding to it. (*Music ends.*)

Now, I never heard Hank in any of those blood buckets he played in. In fact, I might not have met him at all, if it hadn't been for a young lady who would come to be known as "a woman of consequence." (*Audrey is seen. She is radiant.*)

JIMMY. Harm was only jes' eighteen years old when we played this medicine show down in Banks, Alabama, south of Montgomery. An' that's when he first laid eyes on a pretty little country gal name o' Audrey Mae. (*Hank sees Audrey and sidles up to her. Slow dances with her for a moment.*)

HOSS. Or Miss Audrey, as he always called her. An attractive woman.

JIMMY. She could melt the wax off a Dixie cup at fifty feet. (*Hank brings Audrey to the group in the car.*)

HANK. Now this here's Hoss.

AUDREY. Hi, Hoss.

HOSS. Ma'am.

HANK. An' the fella with his jaw hangin' wide open is Loudmouth.

LEON. Leon, Ma'am. Pleasure.

HANK. This is Mama and an' we call this goof Burrhead.

JIMMY. I'm proud to meet you, ma'am. They call me Jimmy, sometimes.

MAMA LILLY. Come on, *boys*, we're runnin' late!

HANK. (*Sitting next to Mama, he gives Audrey his hand.*) Get in the car, baby, we're ready to roll!

AUDREY. Hello, Miz Williams. Tight squeeze, ain't it?

MAMA LILLY. Indeed it is. (*Mama shifts gears, slams on the gas, and all jolt back in their seats.*)

JIMMY. Well, Hank tells us you're a pretty fair singer yourself.

AUDREY. What's your name again?

JIMMY. Jimmy.

AUDREY. Where're you from, Jimmy?

JIMMY. Oh, I come outta Tulsa.

AUDREY. *Oklahoma?*

JIMMY. Yes, ma'am.

AUDREY. Well say, do you know how to save a drownin' Okie?

JIMMY. No, I don't believe I do.

AUDREY. Good! (*She laughs, then everyone laughs except Mama.*)

MAMA LILLY. And where is it *you're* from, *Tawdry?*

HANK. That's Audrey, Mama.

AUDREY. I come from way down in the country, outside o' Banks.

MAMA LILLY. Oh, and what is it they do way down in the country, 'sides *pickin'?*

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