

# **Dastardly Deeds at the Dixon Depot**

also known as  
*"If you move it - they will come"*

By  
Gary McCarver

An Old West Melodrama

A shorter version customized for  
Online Readers' Theatre is also available

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# Dastardly Deeds at the Dixon Depot

## (A “Teaser” Announcement)

Up for a little adventure? Welcome back to the small western town of Dixon for the story of a lost love, a “rehabilitated” villain, a jilted woman, and a framed sheriff.

Since every Melodrama needs a villain ... your will not be disappointed when you meet that scoundrel Professor Mack. Other folk in town include the Judge Jerry Mander, his daughter and our Heroine Sally Mander, that irrepressible Gypsy Claire Voyant who now runs the local saloon as well as our clueless hero Justin Credible.

Of course, included are a whole slew of authentic old-time songs, live sound effects and an ample supply of cue-cards that tell you what is going on.

Through the magic of Melodrama and Zoom, prepare to be transported back to that much simpler year of 1883 for the retelling of this tale of the old west ... a time when a whole town could up and move to get closer to the railroad tracks. A time when the men were strong, the liquor was stronger, and all the women wore corsets in old Dixon's version of the barbary coast ... well at least that is our story and we're sticking to it. Now turn back your calendars back for the twists, the turns, and old west fun found in this Melodrama entitled - "*Dastardly Deeds at the Dixon Depot*".

## (A “Teaser” for Playbills)

### “Dastardly Deeds at the Dixon Depot”

Get transported to the much simpler year of 1883 in the small western town of Dixon for the story of a lost love, a "rehabilitated" scoundrel, a jilted woman, and a framed sheriff. Toss foam rocks at the Villain. Cheer for the mysterious Gypsy Claire Voyant, the clueless sheriff Justin Credible, and the melodic Sally Mander. Of course, you can expect a whole slew of authentic old-time songs played live in this family friendly old west melodrama.

# THE CAST

(in order of appearance)

**4 M & 6F + Piano Player + Optional Narrator**

**Cue-Card Maven – PAIGE Turner** – For those that don't come to melodramas often ... Paige reminds the audience as needed with cues like “Boo ... Hiss” or “Shameless Plug”.

**PROFESSOR Mack** – The “rehabilitated” conman, scoundrel, and villain returns with yet another evil scheme.

**The Heroine – SALLY Mander** – The Judge's only daughter and the popular star singer over at the Saloon. Everyone calls her “Sally Mander”.

**The Gypsy – CLAIRE Voyant** – The former sideshow soothsayer who now finds her past coming back to haunt her and taunt her as the Professor comes back into her life.

**The Hero – JUSTIN Credible** – A simple and good-natured cowpoke who is handy with a gun but clueless as a sheriff. There is only one gal for him ... Sally Mander.

**JUDGE – Jerry Mander** – As gruff and as stern a man as you have ever met. He only has one soft spot in his heart ... and that is for his daughter Sally.

**ANN Chovie – BETTY Diddent – SARAH Bellum** – These “Dixon Delights” are singers from the local Saloon that help “gussy up” the town of old Dixon with back-up vocals to the tunes you hear.

**DOC Phil McCavity – The Town Dentist and Undertaker** – Doctor Phil is often pulled into the action between extractions.

**Optional EXTRAS** – You can use a couple of saloon audience members as extras and even a little girl who has lost her kitten. (Optional little girl extra dialogue can be found in Act 1 Scene 2)

**THE NARRATOR** role can be any Dixon Delight, Claire, Doc, or the Paige. It can also be cast as a stand-alone or walk-on character.

# SONG LIST

Songs in order of performance

## **There's A Place That I Know**

Words by Gene Buck & Gary McCarver

Music by Dave Stamper

## **Beautiful Dixon My Home**

Words by Gary McCarver

Music by Creamer and Layton & Gary McCarver

## **Oh, Pretty Baby**

Lyrics by Gus Kahn & Gary McCarver

Music by Tony Jackson & Egbert Van Alstyne

## **Blue**

Words by Grant Clarke & Edgar Leslie & Gary McCarver

Music by Lou Handman

## **Sally Mander**

Words by Gary McCarver

Music by Will Donaldson & Rubey Cowan

## **Kiss Me, Kiss Me Again**

Words by Henry Blossom & Gary McCarver

Music by Victor Herbert

## **Reprise - There's A Place That I Know**

Words by Gene Buck & Gary McCarver

Music by Dave Stamper

## **Curtain Call Song**

### **'Till You Visit Again**

Words by Jack Drislane & Gary McCarver

Music by Chris Smith

# ACT 1 SCENE 1

The Place: Dixon – near Train Depot  
The Date: November 17<sup>th</sup>, 1883  
The Time: Sun is setting early in twilight

*(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS AND HOLDS UP A CUE-CARD)*  
**CUE-CARD** – *Evening in Old Dixon – November 1883*

*(PAIGE EXITS)*  
*(MUSIC STARTS)*

**CLAIRE** – *(to the audience)* By the look of the sun setting on the sunflower filled plains of this town we call Dixon ... you know that it's time for one last song as they call it a night here at the Centennial Hotel. So, dust off your Stetson and put your hands together for Sally Mander and the Dixon Delights.

**SONG – There's A Place That I Know**  
Sung by Sally Mander & The Dixon Delights  
Words by Gene Buck and Gary McCarver  
Music by Dave Stamper

## **INTRO & CHORUS**

There's a place that I know ... where the sweet waters flow.  
Where the sky is so clear and blue.  
It's a place far from care and I want to go there ...  
and I bet you'll want to go there too!  
Where the people you meet as you walk down the street  
are like family and know your name.  
Pack your bags ... come away. I know you'll want to stay.  
Where the people will greet you  
and folks are glad to meet you.  
It's the town that we call ... Dix-on.

*(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS AND HOLDS UP A CUE-CARD)*  
**CUE-CARD** – *Applause (PAIGE EXITS)*

**SALLY** – Good night, ladies and gentlemen and do be sure to come back tomorrow for some of the best food and tunes where many a weary traveler has rested on their way to California gold country.

**THE DIXON DELIGHTS** – Goodnight everyone.  
*(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS AND HOLDS UP A CUE-CARD)*

**CUE-CARD** – *Meanwhile – Out on the Lonesome Prairie*  
(PAIGE EXITS)

**(LIGHTS FADE UP** on the “Lonesome Prairie” part of the set)

**THE NARRATOR** – *We find a lone cowboy sitting on a rock in the twilight punctuated by the light of a flickering (simulated) campfire. Next to our cowboy we see the tail of a horse wagging from behind a tree or rock outcropping.*

**(SOUND EFFECTS** – *Hoots of owls and the howl of a coyote.*)

**(SOUND EFFECTS** – *Sound of horse hooves slowing down then the sound of the horse “Palomitas” neighing or whinnying*)

**JUSTIN** – *(talking to his horse)* Palomitas ... You’ve been a tireless and faithful horse out here on the range, but I think 6 months of nothing but beans and jerky is finally taking its toll on us.

**(SOUND EFFECT** – *Palomitas is neighing and passing gas*)

**(SOUND EFFECT** – *a long lonesome train whistle in the distance*)

**JUSTIN** – You are telling me. *(beat)* The money is good enough out on these cattle drives, but maybe ... just maybe it’s time we stop all this wandering around and head on back to Dixon. *(beat)* What do you think Palomitas?

**(SOUND EFFECT** – *Palomitas is neighing and whinnying*)

**JUSTIN** – I know ... I know ... I should stop all my bellyaching. But you can only eat so much jerky and beans before you hanker for a home cooked meal. And Sally was the best cook you could imagine and ... as pretty as a picture.

*(JUSTIN holds up picture of Sally Mander for all to see.)*

**(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS AND HOLDS UP A CUE-CARD)**

**CUE-CARD** – *Ahhhhh!* (PAIGE EXITS)

**(SOUND EFFECT** – *Palomitas is neighing and whinnying*)

**JUSTIN** – Even a meal at Little Casino and The Pearl would be better than whatever it is that cook rustled up for us.

*(Looking disgusted at the food in the bowl)*

**(SOUND EFFECT** – *Palomitas is neighing and whinnying*)



**JUSTIN** – I suppose it's late and I'm plumb tuckered out too.

*(SOUND EFFECT – Palomitas is neighing in agreement)*

**JUSTIN** – But before we call it a night out here out on the lonesome prairie... I can't help but think about that little town of ours. I suppose you want me to sing that song to you again.

*(SOUND EFFECT – Palomitas neighs in the negative.)*

*(MUSIC STARTS – can be the piano score or use a guitar.)*

**JUSTIN** – I will take that as a yes.

**SONG – Beautiful Dixon My Home**

Words by Gary McCarver

Music by Creamer and Layton

*(NOTE – Sung by JUSTIN in a soulful old western style.)*

**VERSE**

**GUITAR CHORDS**

Night time's 'a fallin' ....	C
the whippoorwills are calling	
come on home ... just come on home.	C
Moonlight is shining, the wind is softly pining ....	C E7
come on home ... won't-cha come on home.	A7 A Am
Listen' ... Those crickets are calling just for you.	D Dm C
Come now ... there's no use in stalling ....	Am Cm D7
you want to go home too!	D7 F G7

**CHORUS**

I guess it's time to go home	C
like bees back to their honey comb.	A D7
From that old Depot ... A lonesome whistle blows	Dm Gm Dm G
tellin' you it's time to come home	D7 G
instead of out here all alone ...	C
and then I will never more roam	A7 D7
Oh that May Fair fun it's calling you.	D7 C E Am
Those fields of sunflowers spring'n up	Em B7
just for you too.	Em
(Oh) Beautiful Dixon my home	F C G7 A7
(Yes) Beautiful Dixon my home.	D G7 C

*(JUSTIN says "Yes Sir" at end of first chorus if repeated.)*

*(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS AND HOLDS UP A CUE-CARD)*

**CUE-CARD** – Applause (*PAIGE EXITS*)

**(SOUND EFFECT** – *Palomitas is neighing with disturbance*)

**JUSTIN** – You want me to sing it again?

**(SOUND EFFECT** – *Palomitas is neighing with disturbance*)

**JUSTIN** – What is it Palomitas? ... “*Trouble is brewing back in Dixon*” you say?

**(SOUND EFFECT** – *Palomitas is neighing and whinnying*)

**JUSTIN** – How in blazes can you know that?

**(SOUND EFFECT** – *Palomitas is neighing and whinnying*)

**JUSTIN** – What do you mean - “*I’m oblivious to the gravity of the schemes and shenanigans going on back home?*” and “*I we should postpone our perambulatin’ and traipse’n and get a wiggle on.*”

**(SOUND EFFECT** – *Palomitas is neighing and whinnying*)

**JUSTIN** – Well then ... I’m not one to disagree with your ‘horse sense’ even though it’s late. Yep. We best head back to Dixon.

**(SOUND EFFECTS** – *Hoots of owls, whippoorwills, and the howl of a coyote off in the distance are heard.*)

**(LIGHTS GO DOWN** *on the prairie part of the set*)

**FADE TO BLACK**

## ACT 1 SCENE 2

The Place: Dixon – near Train Depot  
The Date: November 18<sup>th</sup>, 1883  
The Time: Early in the morning

*(LIGHTS COME UP quickly on the saloon/hotel part of the stage as noise, conversation and laughter from SALLY, ANN, BETTY, and SARAH come through optional swinging doors of the saloon.)*

*(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS AND HOLDS UP A CUE-CARD)*  
**CUE-CARD** – Next Morning in Dixon *(PAIGE EXITS)*

*(SOUND EFFECT – Rooster crowing good morning)*

**SALLY and THE GIRLS** – Gooood morning everyone.

*(MUSIC STARTS)*

### **SONG – Oh, Pretty Baby**

Sung by SALLY, ANN, BETTY, and SARAH  
Lyrics by Gus Kahn and Gary McCarver  
Music by Tony Jackson & Egbert Van Alstyne

**CHORUS** *(Sung once or twice based upon blocking)*

Ev'ry body needs a baby that's why we're invitin' you ...  
pretty baby (Oh) pretty baby. And if you're looking for a honey  
just to spend some time with you ... pretty baby ... pretty baby.  
Why don't come and mosey over to our little saloon,  
we're there most any time. (Oh yeah.)  
We've been looking for a sweetie  
and it Might as well be you. Come on over some time.

*(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS AND HOLDS UP A CUE-CARD)*  
**CUE-CARD** – Applause *(PAIGE EXITS)*

**SALLY and THE GIRLS** – Thank you. Thank you very much.

*(SALLY is looking out to the distance sadly)*

**SARAH** – *(to SALLY)* There you go thinking about him again ...  
aren't you. Well ... aren't you?

**SALLY** – Sara Bellum ... there you go with that thinking you always do. As for me ... I stay hopeful that Justin will be back real soon.

**SARAH** – Sally, you've been saying that for weeks.

**BETTY** – ... Why do you pine for one man? From my experience ... men are about as useful as the letter G in lasagna. What's so unique about this one?

**SALLY** – Ladies ... "Justin" is so much more than unique ... he's *(beat)* ... one of a kind.

**ANN** – ... Any man in town would cut off his good arm to call you his girlfriend.

**SALLY** – But I don't want to date a one-armed man.

**SARAH** – *(said to ANN)* Good point she has there.

**SALLY** – I just have to believe that he is on his way back right now.

*(CLAIRE VOYANT ENTERS flamboyantly)*

**CLAIRE** – I have traveled the length and breadth of this world and in all my journeys, I have never met a man that can be trusted. You might as well stop thinking that he'll be coming back to you Sally ... the sooner you face it ... the better.

*(CLAIRE EXITS through swinging doors)*

**SALLY** – Sarah ... I know I usually see the best in everyone ... but when did Claire get so cynical?

**ANN** – *(to the audience)* For those of you that are new to town ... Claire was the life of the party ... they called her "*Claire Voyant the Amazing*" ... she used to be a fortune teller with Madame Zorinda's traveling circus un-till ...

**BETTY** – *(walking into the ASIDE)* ... un-till ... that "man" she fell in love with ... plumb ran out on her.

*(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS with yet another Cue-Card)*

**CUE-CARD** – *That's just so sad! (PAIGE EXITS)*

*(Both ANN and BETTY look at each other then go to SALLY)*

**SALLY** – What “Man” are you talking about?

**SARAH** – Didn’t you know ... Her old beau (*snidely*) ... “*The Professor*”.

**ANN** – She knew him years ago. She met him right here in Dixon at the May Fair one Sunday morning.

**SALLY** – Imagine that! Traveling the world ... then finding the man of your dreams back here in Dixon.

**BETTY** – Not sure if it was a dream or a nightmare. Well ... this story did not exactly have the happy ending you were imagining. I heard tell that her “*Professor*” had some serious trouble with the law and left town all sudden like.

**SARAH** – He told Claire he’d come back and take her away from all of this (*make a big gesture with arms outstretched*) ... but ...

**BETTY** – ... But she never heard “hide nor hair” from him again.

**SALLY** – ... That is just so sad.

*(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS with yet another Cue-Card)*

**CUE-CARD** – *That’s just so sad! (PAIGE EXITS)*

**SALLY** – ... Not a single solitary word? ...

**SARAH** – Nope. Not a peep ... So, one day ... she simply stopped waiting and bought the Saloon.

**SALLY** – I simply believe ... that if you want something with all your heart ... it’s just bound to come true!

*(SOUND EFFECT – musical chimes or bell tree)*

**SARAH** – What fairy tale did you walk out of?

**THE DIXON DELIGHTS** – *(They all laugh or chuckle)*

**SALLY** – I don’t care what you might think ... I know in my heart that my Justin will return when he finishes that one last big cattle run he wrote me about. *(SALLY holds up a letter)*

*(CLAIRE ENTERS again through the saloon's swinging doors and snatches the letter from SALLY's hands)*

**CLAIRE** – That's what men are always doing ... running. Running Cattle ... running or ruining your lives ... then running away.

*(SALLY snatches the letter back)*

**SALLY** – My “Justin” is different.

**CLAIRE** – That's what they all say. Shoo now ... you've got another show to do in about 15 minutes. Ladies ... you might want to get a shake on.

**ANN** – Sally ... as you can see ... Claire is a little bitter about the whole “Professor” topic. I hope one day she will get over it and we will have our old Claire back.

**BETTY** – You know ... before “that Pro-fessor” showed up ... she had the pick of the litter of the eligible suitors here in town.

**SARAH** – There was this dairy man that was kind of sweet on her.

**BETTY** – *(interrupting)* and you forgot that swine master and that man that had that sheep ranch up near lake Berryessa.

**CLAIRE** – *(interrupting)* I said shoo now.

*(THE DIXON DELIGHTS and SALLY MANDER EXIT)*

**CLAIRE** – *(ASIDE)* Some people say I'm indifferent ... but personally *(beat)* ... I don't care.

*(CLAIRE EXITS)*

**FADE TO BLACK**

## ACT 1 SCENE 3

The Place: Dixon – near the Train Depot  
The Date: November 18<sup>th</sup>, 1883  
The Time: Later that very same day

**(LIGHTS UP)**

*(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS AND HOLDS UP A CUE-CARD)*  
**CUE-CARD** – Later that Day *(PAIGE EXITS)*

*(CLAIRE is looking the other direction from where the PROFESSOR is about to enter ... ANN is talking to BETTY.)*

**ANN** – *(to BETTY)* I know you told me not to bring up the topic with Claire ... but if she doesn't talk about it, she'll never get over it.

**BETTY** – Don't Say I didn't warn you.

**ANN** – Claire. So come now ... tell me about that old flame.

**CLAIRE** – Well ... if you really must know ... he's one of those people who makes enemies as naturally as soap makes suds.

*(SARAH and SALLY enter the scene)*

**SARAH** – Oh you mean that "Professor" of yours?

**CLAIRE** – I don't think he was ever really "MY Professor". He was nothing more than a lying good for nothing, card cheat, scoundrel, and conman. Here's my last picture of him.

*(CLAIRE holds up a wanted poster for the professor.)*

**SARAH** – Fine. Probably good if we change the subject.

**ANN** – *(joking with CLAIRE)* A scoundrel sounds mild for that man. I remember you mentioning once that he was probably in jail.

*(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS AND HOLDS UP A CUE-CARD)*  
**CUE-CARD** – Boo ... Hiss! *(PAIGE EXITS)*

*(The Girls see the PROFESSOR entering behind CLAIRE.)*

*(The PROFESSOR holds a finger to his mouth to signify “Shush”.)*

**BETTY** – I suppose maybe he might have been released on “good behavior”.

**CLAIRE** – “Good behavior?” ... Very unlikely. I'd give odds that he bribed someone to get out!

*(The PROFESSOR nods his head “YES” and All the Girls shake their heads in unison with him as he does.)*

**ANN** – *(describing – change as needed)* Was he tall with a beard?

**CLAIRE** – Yes ... a striking man ... He'd strike just about anything or anyone that got in his way.

**SARAH** – ... And dressed mostly in black?

**CLAIRE** – Why ... Yes. Probably to match his heart!

**SALLY** – *(Looking at the PROFESSOR)* And he wore a black cape? ... and he wore a tall ...

**CLAIRE** – *(very quickly interrupting)* ... A tall black top hat. Let me think ... it was where we first met ... the Professor was selling powders, pills, and potions from that traveling medicine show of his.

**PROFESSOR** – Claire ... don't talk about me as if I am not eavesdropping on every word you say.

**CLAIRE and ALL THE GIRLS** – Oh My!

*(CLAIRE now slowly turns around to see the PROFESSOR holding a single red rose and trying his best to be charming.)*

**PROFESSOR** – I told you that you had not seen the last of Professor Mack. Remember?

**CLAIRE** – And I told you that I would wait for you ... and I waited and then waited some more ...

*(THE PROFESSOR hands her the flower and kisses her hand.)*

**CLAIRE** – ... You were never known to make such a quiet entrance.



**PROFESSOR** – Normally only to banks at midnight, my dear.

**CLAIRE** – What brings you back to Dixon? Tell the truth if that is even possible for you.

**PROFESSOR** – Maybe ... I simply missed your smiling face.

**CLAIRE** – Why should I believe you?

**PROFESSOR** – Claire ... I'm a reformed man.

*(CLAIRE tosses the rose off stage.)*

**CLAIRE** – The only thing “reformed” about you ... is that school you went to as a child! Well, this day was a total waste of makeup.

*(CLAIRE EXITS storms off stage.)*

**PROFESSOR** – *(calling after CLAIRE)* ... So ... should I wait here?

*(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS AND HOLDS UP A CUE-CARD)*

**CUE-CARD** – Boo ... Hiss! *(PAIGE EXITS)*

**PROFESSOR** – ... So ... should I wait?

*(BETTY, ANN, and SALLY turn to EXIT following CLAIRE)*

**PROFESSOR** – *(to Audience)* ... I will wait.

*(THE PROFESSOR pulls out a newspaper and sits down to read it in a chair to wait. JUDGE and DOC ENTER for some libations.)*

**DOC** – Judge ... hold up a minute.

**JUDGE** – Well ... isn't it Phil McCavity our town dentist and undertaker ... whatever is it that you want Doctor Phil ... it can wait until after my afternoon beer.

**DOC** – Judge, after what I have to say - you'll need two beers.

**JUDGE** – All right ... now you've got my attention ... so what's the bad news this time?

**DOC** – You know how every few weeks a gang of desperados comes into town to shoot up the place ...

**JUDGE** – ... And the sheriff ... if they can find him.

**DOC** – Well the bad news is ... that new Sheriff you hired has up and quit on us before the bandits even arrived in town.

**JUDGE** – Jumpin' Jehoshaphat's! The town's overdue for a good shooting up. He can't quit now!

**DOC** – Well ... he just did. He packed his bags and vamoosed on the train. If it's any consolation, he left his hat and this badge for me to give to you.

*(PHIL holds up a sheriff's badge for all to see.)*

*(SOUND EFFECT – A single long Train Whistle)*

**JUDGE** – Well ... at least he left the badge.

**DOC** – This town goes through sheriffs ... like a horse goes through shoes.

**JUDGE** – Where are we going to find a man brave enough ...

**DOC** – ... or gullible enough... to take the job?

**JUDGE** – So what we need ... is a man that is ... how should I say this ... “Not the sharpest knife in the drawer.”

**DOC** – You mean “One board short of a porch” or “One hot pepper short of an enchilada.”

**JUDGE** – Sure ... That' about right ...

**DOC** – “A few clowns short of a circus.” Or “A few kernels short of an ear.”

**JUDGE** – I think we got your point.

**DOC** – or “A few hot wings short of a Buckthorn Bar's happy hour special.”

*(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS holding a CUE-CARD)*

**CUE-CARD** – *Shameless Plug (PAIGE EXITS)*

*(Offstage we hear JUSTIN arriving with his horse Palomitas)*

**JUSTIN** – *(heard offstage)* Whoa. Whoa there Palomitas.

*(JUSTIN ENTERS looking around and carrying his)*

**DOC** – Why look ... it's Justin Credible coming back to town. Didn't he use to be sweet on your daughter Sally?

**JUSTIN** – Finally ... back in beautiful Dixon.

**JUDGE** – *(to DOC MCCAVIDY)* Yep ... A good man ... honest as the day is long ... a great shot, but ... about as "sharp as a marble".

**DOC** – ... Yep definitely "one sandwich short of a picnic". *(Laugh)*

**JUDGE** – Doc ... *(pause)* are you thinking what I'm Thinking?

**DOC** – I'm thinking that some biscuits and fig marmalade would be good right about now? ...

**JUDGE** – *(interrupting)* ... No! *(beat)* I'm thinking that ... we may just have found our new Sheriff.

**DOC** – Where ... *(looking at JUSTIN as he almost trips over a crate or does something clumsy)* ... Oh! I see what you're thinking.

*(JUDGE and DOC MCCAVIDY walk over to greet JUSTIN).*

**JUDGE** – *(Privately to DOC)* Let me handle this. Remember ... a little inaccuracy and misdirection saves a whole lot of explanation.

**JUDGE** – Justin ... welcome back to Dixon.

**JUSTIN** – Howdy ... Judge ... and Doc McCavity ...

*(JUSTIN starts to walk off, but the JUDGE stops him)*

**JUDGE** – Just-'in town ... are you?

**JUSTIN** – Yep ... Just-'in today. First, I was going to go over to the livery and grab some grub at "Con's Saloon".

**JUDGE** – "Con's" is not really a saloon ... more of a beer hall.

**DOC** – If you want better food head over to the Solano Beer Hall.

**JUSTIN** – Come to think of it ... no time for food now. I will head over to The Centennial to see Sally ...

**JUDGE** – My daughter Sally had been wondering when you'd finally be back in town.

**JUSTIN** – Was she? (*JUSTIN stops trying to walk away*)

**JUDGE** – Yes ... yes indeed. You're just about all she talks about. Justin this ... Justin that. Too bad you don't have a steady job here in town.

**JUSTIN** – What do you mean?

**JUDGE** – Well ... Sally does have high standards, being a star entertainer and all over at the Centennial. These days I only let gentlemen call on her who are gainfully employed. So ... I must be going ... it was nice seeing you again.

(*JUDGE grabs DOC and both start to walk away from JUSTIN*)

**JUSTIN** – Judge, you know everything here is town. You wouldn't happen to know of a job in town.

(*The JUDGE and DOC turn back to talk with JUSTIN again*)

**JUDGE** – Dixon is only a few years from moving itself lock stock and barrel from Silveyville 3 and a half miles to this spot when the train missed town. Not many jobs to speak of since the move, and the recent stock market panic ... still ... I like you son. There is one job that comes to mind ... now that you mention it. But ...

**JUSTIN** – But what?

**JUDGE** – Come to think of it ... I don't know if it's right for you ... it's a heap of responsibility.

**JUSTIN** – What is?

**DOC** – How'd YOU ... like to be town sheriff?

(*JUDGE holds up a sheriff's badge to show JUSTIN*)

**JUSTIN** – Don't you already have a sheriff?

**JUDGE** – Interesting that you bring that up. By a fortuitous turn of events ... we just happen to have an opening in that area. So, what do you say?

**DOC** – The old sheriff is not dead or nothing. He just up and quit on us.

**JUSTIN** – Well ... I don't rightly know ...

**THE JUDGE** – It pays \$20 per week ...

**DOC** – *(interrupting)* \$25 weekly if you have your own gun. I hear tell you're handy with that peacemaker you've got there?

**JUDGE** – So ... what do you say Justin?

**JUSTIN** – I can shoot ... yes ... if that's what people are saying.

**JUDGE** – Great! So, then it settled ... you start today!

**JUSTIN** – But ... I didn't say ...

*(DOC MCCAIVY Pins the Sheriff's badge onto JUSTIN's vest)*

**DOC** – Doesn't that badge look natural on you?

**JUSTIN** – Does it? Well ... I've always wanted ...

**DOC** – *(interrupting)* The Jail House is right over there.

*(A painted flat slides out to represent a jail. With actual bars in a cut out window. And the rear of the horse Palomitas is showing.)*

**JUDGE** – Oh ... and by the way ... If you were wondering ... since you are now a pillar of the community ... Sally is over at the Centennial right now. I suspect you might want to tell her ... you're back in town.

**JUSTIN** – Don't mind if I do ... after I check out the jailhouse.

**JUDGE** – *(to DOC)* Doc ... let's leave him to get settled in. He's got more important things than talking to two old men.

*(The JUDGE and DOC MCCAVIDY start to walk away)*

**DOC** – Oh ... Judge?

**JUDGE** – What is it now?

**DOC** – I didn't want to say anything, but I saw a tattooed stranger wandering around town other day ... and I bet he's one of them desperados.

**JUDGE** – How do you know?

**DOC** – He had trouble ... written all over him. *(laugh)*

**JUDGE** – Well then ... he must have been from Davis.

*(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS AND HOLDS UP A CUE-CARD)*

**CUE-CARD** – Davis? *(PAIGE EXITS)*

*(The JUDGE & DOC MCCAVIDY EXIT into the Saloon)*

**JUSTIN** – *(calling after)* Thanks again for the job! *(Polishing his badge)* Me ... Sheriff! Well ... ain't that something.

*(JUSTIN heads into the jail house just missing CLAIRE and SALLY and DIXON DELIGHTS as they walk out of the Saloon.)*

**SALLY** – So Claire, the Professor is back in town just to see you?

**ANN, SARAH, and BETTY** – Oh My!

**SARAH** – Maybe he is “rehabilitated” like he says ...

**CLAIRE** – The Professor “rehabilitated”? *(Laughing)* You take the lies out of him, and he'll shrink to the size of your hat. You take the scoundrel out of him ... and he'd disappear entirely.

*(SALLY EXITS inside the saloon. CLAIRE spots the PROFESSOR sitting in the chair and walks over to him.)*

**CLAIRE** – *(said mockingly to the PROFESSOR)* Oh ... are you still here ... don't you have some place to RUN off to?

*(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS AND HOLDS UP A CUE-CARD)*

**CUE-CARD** – Boo ... Hiss! *(PAIGE EXITS)*

**PROFESSOR** – Claire, aren't you the vision of loveliness ...

**CLAIRE** – Professor ... you used to be arrogant and obnoxious. Now I find that you are just the opposite. *(beat)* Obnoxious and arrogant.

**PROFESSOR** – I don't remember you as sarcastic Claire. Not saying that I don't like it ... I just don't remember it.

***(MUSIC STARTS)***

*(The DIXON DELIGHTS gather around CLAIRE to protect him from the PROFESSOR and are prepared to sing along with CLAIRE.)*

**CLAIRE** – Professor, I'll have you know that just looking at you gives me the fiercest desire ... to be lonesome and blue again.

**SONG – Blue**

Sung by CLAIRE with back up by the DIXON DELIGHTS  
Words by Grant Clarke, Edgar Leslie, and Gary McCarver  
Music by Lou Handman

**VERSE**

I've learned to live life alone without you.  
I've learned to stop wondering where you are.  
When I think back to that time I knew you ...  
it only makes me so sad and oh ... so ...

**CHORUS**

*(DIXON DELIGHTS join in as back-up singers ...in brackets)*

Blue ... 'cause we are parted.  
    (... she's blue ... she's blue ...)  
Blue ... and broken hearted.  
    (... it's true ... it's true ...)  
    (There was a time she was jolly.  
Now you're the reason she's melancholy.)  
Blue and oh so ...  
    (... she's blue ... she's blue ...)  
Lonely. True ... I wanted you  
    (... it's true ... it's true ...)  
  
Only. Now I'm through grievin' ...

'cause it's the time for gettin'  
(... ooooooh ...)  
even ... so that you're ... blue ... too!  
(... you're ... blue ... too!)

**(Repeat Chorus)**

**CLAIRE** – Girls ... if you will excuse us a moment.

*(SALLY, ANN, BETTY, and SARAH EXIT into the Saloon)*

**CLAIRE** – Professor ... I may have loved you once but ... now I regard you with an indifference bordering on aversion.

**PROFESSOR** – Don't mince words Claire. How do you really feel about me? *(beat) (taking her hand)* By the absence of that ring I gave you ... I hope it's not sitting in a drawer and you put it to better use?

**CLAIRE** – Oh yes. I sold that ring so I could buy this saloon ... if that's what you're talking about.

**PROFESSOR** – Excellent ... simply excellent!

**CLAIRE** – What are you mumbling about?

*(The PROFESSOR scanning the area looking around.)*

**PROFESSOR** – I just needed to make sure we are not being overheard by these local bumpkins.

*(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS AND HOLDS UP A CUE-CARD)*  
**CUE-CARD** – Boo ... Hiss! *(PAIGE EXITS)*

**CLAIRE** – You're always thinking people are out to get you professor.

**PROFESSOR** – Personally, I believe that paranoia is under-appreciated. *(pause)* My plans have been in the making since I first heard about the scheme that redirected the train tracks from Silveyville some years back.

**CLAIRE** – A scheme you say?

*(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS AND HOLDS UP A CUE-CARD)*



**CUE-CARD** – Boo ... Hiss! (*PAIGE EXITS*)

**PROFESSOR** – I was playing a game of cards with a man not long ago and he shared a story with me that caught my attention. He said that when Central Pacific railroad came through the area and somehow “missed” Silveyville by a few miles it was not an accident. And when the town of Dixon sprung up around the new railroad tracks taking the old buildings that surrounded old man Silvey’s hotel ... all the better.

**CLAIRE** – What are you talking about. Are you sure you haven’t been too long out in the sun?

**PROFESSOR** – Claire ... with most of the residents of Silveyville moving here to Dixon ... a person could buy the whole town for pennies on the dollar don’t you think?

*(PIANO CHORD – evil scheming theme)*

**CLAIRE** – What in blazes are you talking about? What possible purpose would be served by buying up an entire town?

**PROFESSOR** – I’m very glad that you asked that question ...

**PROFESSOR** – *(ASIDE)* Mostly because I haven’t divulged my nefarious scheme yet.

*(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS AND HOLDS UP A CUE-CARD)*

**CUE-CARD** – Boo ... Hiss!

**PROFESSOR** – There ... that’s much better.

*(PAIGE TURNER Walks over to the PROFESSOR)*

**PAIGE TURNER** – Boo ... Hiss! (*PAIGE EXITS*)

**PROFESSOR** – Claire, let me tell you all about my scheme ...

**CLAIRE** – I know that I am going to regret this.

*(PROFESSOR and CLAIRE EXIT as JUSTIN ENTERS from the jailhouse wearing a white Stetson. DOC ENTERS)*

**DOC** – ... It is nice having a new sheriff ... ‘gonn’a go a long way to make everybody feel safe here in town ...

*(ANN CHOVIE walks over to JUSTIN to flirt with him)*

**ANN** – So ... when did you come to town, handsome?

*(SALLY ENTERS rushing to JUSTIN and scowling at ANN for a moment. SALLY moves closer to JUSTIN hoping for a kiss.)*

**SALLY** – Justin! ... You're back! ... As ... Sheriff? Oh My!

*(MUSIC STARTS)*

**JUSTIN** – I couldn't stay away from Dixon ... or from YOU Sally.  
(beat) Sometimes a cowpoke just can't say the words he feels face to face, but that don't mean we can't put feelings in a song. And so ... I wrote this one for you.

*(SALLY puckers up for a kiss, but JUSTIN walks to center instead.)*

**SONG – Sally Mander**

Words by Gary McCarver

Music by Will Donaldson & Rubey Cowan

I've Traveled all a-round this land ... from sea to shining sea.  
But where ever I may be there's a place that's calling back to me.  
A pretty girl lives in that town ... I'm hankerin' to see.  
No, her name's not Flo nor Tes nor Rose ...  
it's Sally that's for me!

**CHORUS**

I think I'm in love with Sally Mander,  
You've never met a girl as sweet as she.  
It could be time to settle down ... and maybe stay in this here town,  
as long as my sweet Sally is around.  
(Well) what I guess I'm saying.  
Maybe it is time to "pop that question" ...  
Maybe she will say those words "I Do".  
(Dixon Delights sing: Yes I do ... Yes I do ... Yes I do)  
So, I reckon' it's time that I know ... now with hat in hand I go ...  
to see my Sally - that gal that I'm in love with so.

***(REPEAT CHORUS)***

**JUSTIN** – So ... do you like your song?

**SALLY** – Just thinking about you makes my heart go pitter patter...

**JUSTIN** – I feel the exact same way, but do I have to say “pitter patter”?

**SALLY** – Have you heard all the fuss that’s been going on in town?

**JUSTIN** – Well I ahhh...

**SALLY** – Well of course you have! You’re the sheriff and everything ... of course you know about the desperadoes ...

**JUSTIN** – Desperadoes? Well, I ahhh ...

**SALLY** – And all the shootings ...

**JUSTIN** – Shootings? Well, I ahhh...

**SALLY** – Oh! I am so proud of you. *(they hug but do not kiss)*

**SALLY** – Our town’s new brave Sheriff ... imagine! ... That will take some getting used to.

*(Grabbing a pocket watch from JUSTIN’s - looks at the time)*

**SALLY** – Just look at the time. Come now ... let’s tell my father that you’re back in town... He will be so excited.

*(Grabbing JUSTIN’s hand ... SALLY leads him off stage)*

**JUSTIN** – Actually I think he already knows ...

*(SALLY and JUSTIN EXIT hand in hand. Meanwhile ... CLAIRE and the PROFESSOR ENTER in mid-conversation talking.)*

**CLAIRE** – ... On top of that ... desperadoes have been coming to town every few weeks. Families are talking about moving. I’ve got bullet holes in my roof from the last time they came to town ...

**PROFESSOR** – There are more important things than a leaky roof.

*(The PROFESSOR holds up a glass vial with black liquid in it.)*

**PROFESSOR** – Do you know what this is my dear?

**CLAIRE** – Whatever it is ... it looks vile.

**PROFESSOR** – This is the future my dear ... the future! Have you ever heard of that contraption called a horseless carriage?

**CLAIRE** – Who hasn't? Moto-wagons are all the rage in the East ... I have heard ...

**PROFESSOR** – *(interrupting)* ... of course ... but do you know what makes them run? Well ... I'll tell you ... it's gas-o-line ... and do you know where gas-o-line comes from?

**CLAIRE** – I'm sure you're about to tell me.

**PROFESSOR** – It comes from this! It is called crude oil.

*(The PROFESSOR holds up the glass vial again for all to see)*

**CLAIRE** – It looks crude for sure, but what does that have to do with the price of tea in china?

**PROFESSOR** – *(looking around)* Not a single person in town knows what riches lie just below their feet. I got a very reliable tip that this entire area is sitting on top of a fortune of this "crude oil".

**CLAIRE** – So ... I knew that there had to be an ulterior motive for you coming back to town.

**PROFESSOR** – I bought up all the land in Silveyville I could get my hands on and soon I'll be able to buy up this town too for pennies on the dollar from these Dixon dimwits.

*(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS AND HOLDS UP A CUE-CARD)*

**CUE-CARD** – *Boo ... Hiss!*

**CLAIRE** – But with Justin as the new sheriff ... I don't think the townsfolk of Dixon will be so easily scared off next time.

**PROFESSOR** – I wasn't counting on them finding a new sheriff so quickly, but I suppose if I can take care of one sheriff ... another one can be taken out of the picture too.

**CLAIRE** – When you say "taken out of the picture" you don't mean you are going to ...

**PROFESSOR** – *(interrupting)* ... Perish the thought, Claire. You know me.

**CLAIRE** – That is why YOU have to promise that you won't ...

**PROFESSOR** – Don't worry ... I simply pulled some strings and made it worth his while to move on to be sheriff in another town. Every man has his price.

**CLAIRE** – I don't think Justin will respond to a bribe.

**PROFESSOR** – I call them "financial opportunities".

**CLAIRE** – Sally says he is honest as the day is long. But promise me that no physical harm will come to him.

**PROFESSOR** – In that case I will simply make that new sheriff as popular as a wool jacket in a Sacramento summer.

*(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS AND HOLDS UP A CUE-CARD)*

**CUE-CARD** – Boo ... Hiss! *(PAIGE EXITS)*

*(Sheriff JUSTIN walks back on stage with SALLY on his arm.)  
(ANN, BETTY, and SARAH walk out in mid-conversation)*

**ANN** – Isn't that new sheriff dreamy?

**SARAH** – Don't get any ideas Annie ...

**BETTY** – Sally saw him first.

**PROFESSOR** – *(talking to CLAIRE)* That new Sheriff has all the virtues I dislike ... and none of the vices I admire. I just wonder how much this town would love that new sheriff if they thought he had something to do with this! Take a gander here.

*(The PROFESSOR pulls out a folded piece of brown paper from his pocket and hands it to CLAIRE. She reads it and gasps.)*

**CLAIRE** – Oh ... that is just so mean! I didn't think that even you were that cruel. How could you?

**PROFESSOR** – I'm glad you approve. Without a sheriff ... chaos will soon return to this little town of Dixon.

*(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS AND HOLDS UP A CUE-CARD)*

**CUE-CARD** – Boo ... Hiss! *(PAIGE EXITS)*

**CLAIRE** – If you do what I think you are planning to do ... how could I ever trust you again. *(pause)* And without trust ... what kind of relationship would that be?

**PROFESSOR** – A pretty common one ... from what I hear.

**CLAIRE** – Well ... I suppose so ...

**PROFESSOR** – Come Claire. I will explain. Let me buy you a sumptuous meal.

**CLAIRE** – What are my choices?

**PROFESSOR** – Yes ... or No.

**PROFESSOR** – *(ASIDE)* My plans are all finally coming together.

**CLAIRE** – *(ASIDE)* I think I smell a plot twist coming and it is one that you will not be expecting.

**PROFESSOR** – What were you saying?

**CLAIRE** – Oh nothing ... that I want you to know.

**PROFESSOR** – Soon this town will be all mine ... *(laugh)*

*(PAIGE TURNER HOLDS UP A CUE-CARD)*

**CUE-CARD** – *Boo ... Hiss! (PAIGE EXITS)*

**CLAIRE** – *(interrupting)* You mean “OURS” ... Don’t you?

*(CLAIRE links her arm with the PROFESSOR’s)*

**PROFESSOR** – Of course ... or course ... OURS it is.

*(The PROFESSOR and CLAIRE EXIT arm linked in arm)*

*(PAIGE TURNER HOLDS UP A CUE-CARD)*

**CUE-CARD** – *INTERMISSION (PAIGE EXITS)*

**FADE TO BLACK**

**INTERMISSION**

## ACT 2 SCENE 1

The Place: Dixon – near Train Depot  
The Date: November 18<sup>th</sup> - 1883  
The Time: Sun is setting early in twilight

**THE NARRATOR** – (*ASIDE*) Welcome back. Now let's return to our story where we find our new sheriff Justin Credible talking with Sally Mander out in front of the old jail house, unaware of the trouble that's brewing.

(*PAIGE TURNER ENTERS and holds up a CUE-CARD*)  
**CUE-CARD** – Later that night. (*PAIGE EXITS*)

(*CLAIRE EXITS*)

(*THE SCENE* – townsfolk meandering about on stage.)

(*SOUND EFFECT* – A train whistle blows twice)

**JUSTIN** – Sally ... well ... don't you look prettier than a gob of butter melting on a stack of wheat cakes.

(*MUSIC STARTS*)

**SALLY** – Thank you ... I think.?

**Song – Kiss Me, Kiss Me Again**

Words by Henry Blossom and Gary McCarver

Music by Victor Herbert

**VERSE** (*SALLY Sings Alone*)

Oh! Sheriff how often you think of the past!  
Can it be ... you forget?  
Maybe it was passion too wondrous to last,  
but I dream ... of it yet.  
I saw you again as you gazed in my eyes,  
with joy and delight.  
Remember you'd hold me and softly you told me  
of love through the star sprinkled night

**CHORUS**

*(becomes a shared Duet between SALLY and JUSTIN)*

Sweet Dixon breeze, whispering trees.  
Stars shining softly above.  
Roses in bloom, bring their perfume ...  
Yellow birds flying above  
Safe in your arms ... far from alarms  
Troubles would come, but in vain.  
Tenderly pressed ... close to your chest.  
Kiss me ... Kiss me again ...  
(Oh Sheriff) Kiss me ... Kiss me again!

*(At the end the song they get for that kiss but are once again interrupted ... this time by the sound of a scream.)*

**THE DIXON DELIGHTS** *(off stage) – (a loud scream in unison)*

*(Then DOC MCCAVIDY and JUDGE MANDER and most of the cast rush on stage in a crowd scene towards the sheriff.)*

**SALLY** – Whatever is all that commotion about?

**DOC** – *(rushing in and talking to the sheriff)* Sheriff ... I found a dead desperado just outback of your jailhouse.

**SALLY** – That is good news ... isn't it?

**DOC** – I'm sorry Sally ... but unfortunately, I also found this note clutched in his ice-cold dead hand.

**EVERYONE** – What's it say?

**DOC** – Apparently, it's a ... "To Do List". Let me read it ...

*(DOC unfolds a small brown note is the one that the PROFESSOR showed to CLAIRE in ACT 1.)*

*(DOC stands there reading silently to himself while everyone looks on and then they move towards him to hear him to read the note.)*

**EVERYONE** – *(in unison)* ... Out loud!

*(DOC cleans his glasses then starts reading. He uses a different voice when he is reading the words of the desperado in the note.)*



**DOC** – Sorry. It's a to do list. It says ... *"First, end my evil ways."*  
*"Then, surrender unarmed to the sheriff and plead for mercy."* ... It  
also says at the bottom ... let's see ... it is a little hard to make out.  
Good, it also says ... *"I sure hope that new sheriff Justin doesn't  
shoot me in the back like a dirty low-down dog ... just like he said to  
me that he would."*

**SALLY and DIXON DELIGHTS** – Oh my!

**DOC** – It's signed and has some initials down at the bottom.

*(DOC shows the To Do List note to Sally to read.)*

**SALLY** – Oh my! Look! It's even notarized. Strange? *(beat)*  
I didn't know desperados used monogrammed stationery?

*(The JUDGE grabs the note from SALLY's hand to read it.)*

**JUDGE** – It doesn't look good for you sheriff. No ... not good at all.

**DOC** – Slim chance you'll talk your way out of this.

**JUDGE** – Sheriff ... so what do you have to say for yourself?

**SALLY** – *(excitedly interjecting)* It just can't be true!

**JUSTIN** – Here ... let me see that note.

*(JUSTIN grabs the note from the JUDGE to examine it.)*

**JUSTIN** – Hummm? *(beat)* The evidence looks pretty bad against  
me. I guess there's nothing else for me to do ...

*(JUSTIN reaches for his gun belt)*

*(All the men freeze and reach for their gun belts as well, crouching  
and expecting a gunfight or shoot out.)*

**JUSTIN** – Yep ... nothing for me to do but ... to arrest myself.

**EVERYONE in Unison** – *(relieved but surprised)* What!?

**JUSTIN** – Yep ... 'gotta put myself in the hoosegow.

**SALLY** – What?

**JUSTIN** – You know ... the jail ... the pokey ... the slammer ...

**SALLY** – I know what it is ... what I meant was ...

**JUSTIN** – ... up the river ... the lock up ... the clink ...

**SALLY** – (*interrupting*) No ... what I meant was ... why are you arresting yourself? You KNOW you are innocent.

**JUSTIN** – That is true ... but I swore an oath to uphold the law ... and ... an oath ... is an oath.

**SALLY** – But you know that you're innocent ...

**JUSTIN** – True ... but the law ... is the law.

**CLAIRE** – Definitely a “Clueless Sheriff” if I ever saw one.

**BETTY** – (*to Audience*) I guess you were all wondering when we would finally fit that into the dialogue?

**DOC** – That sheriff is definitely “several swallow’s short of a flock”.

**JUSTIN** – Nothing more to do than put myself behind bars ...

**DOC** – ... “One ship short of a fleet” ... “One snowflake short a ski slope” ... “One line short of a good script” ...

**SALLY** – (*almost in tears*) Justin ... it just can't be true.

(*PAIGE TURNER ENTERS AND HOLDS UP A CUE-CARD*)

**CUE-CARD** – *That's just so sad!* (*PAIGE EXITS*)

**JUSTIN** – Sally, if you would be so kind as to hold my gun, this note and ... my badge for me. (*sadly*)

(*JUSTIN gives his gun belt, gun, the note, and his badge to SALLY. He walks behind the jail façade, so everyone sees him behind bars.*)

**SALLY** – (*to the JUDGE*) Father! What “ever” can we do?

**JUDGE** – Not much I'm afraid. Evidence ... IS evidence.

**SALLY** – But Father ... you know he couldn't have done it?

**JUDGE** – Sally ... I'm not sure you should be keeping company with "jail birds". Come on now ... let's go on home ...

**SALLY** – But Father!

**JUDGE** – Come now!

*(The JUDGE starts to lead SALLY off stage as the DIXON DELIGHTS EXIT into the and most of the townsfolk EXITS.)*

**JUSTIN** – *(calling to SALLY)* Don't worry about me Sally. Even though I always seem to be in the right place at the wrong time ... things somehow always work out.

**SALLY** – I'll wait for you ... I'll wait for you.

**JUDGE** – Not while I'm Judge in this town! Pack your bags Sally. I'm sending you back east to your Aunt Fiona on the noon train tomorrow.

*(SALLY starts to whimper as she and the JUDGE EXIT)*

*(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS AND HOLDS UP A CUE-CARD)*

**CUE-CARD** – *That's just so sad! (PAIGE EXITS)*

*(CLAIRE goes to center stage to talk to the Audience.)*

**CLAIRE** – *(ASIDE)* The Professor always said that people will believe anything ... as long as the lie is big enough. *(Getting angry)* That Professor! He promised that it wouldn't turn out like this. And I promise you ... it won't ... Not if I can help it. Don't worry ... I've still got a trick or two up my sleeve.

*(CLAIRE storms off into The Saloon)*

**FADE TO BLACK**

## ACT 2 SCENE 2

The Place: Dixon  
The Date: November 19<sup>th</sup> - 1883  
The Time: Later that day and the train is about to leave

**(LIGHTS TO FULL)**

*(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS AND HOLDS UP A CUE-CARD)*  
**CUE-CARD** – Later that Day *(PAIGE EXITS)*

*(THE SCENE – As the lights come up the JUDGE is talking to SARAH at the far corner of the set. JUSTIN is still behind bars in the Jail House and SALLY is hiding herself behind the water tower.)*

*(SOUND EFFECT – Three blasts of a train whistle)*  
*(SPECIAL EFFECT – Smoke comes from behind the Water Tower)*

**OFF STAGE VOICE** – *(conductor's voice)* All aboard!

**JUDGE** – Dad-blasted! Sally is nowhere to be found and the train is about to leave.

**SARAH BELLUM** – So judge ... let me get this straight ... the sheriff put himself behind bars in his own jail house.

**JUDGE** – That's about the size of it.

**SARAH** – If he's as simple minded as you say ... I guess that makes sense. But can he do that? Arrest himself?

**JUDGE** – No law says he can't ... darn confusing if you ask me. *(The JUDGE looks at a pocket watch from his vest.)* I need a drink. It's almost noon ... so I figure one quick drink wouldn't hurt.

**SARAH** – You know that too much liquor is bad for you Judge.

**JUDGE** – I emphatically disagree. I believe that the human brain is like a herd of buffalo.

**SARAH** – I've heard of buffalo ...

**JUDGE** – Like the buffalo ... the weak ones are culled from the herd. Same thing for us ... the slow brain cells are the ones that are killed off by alcohol.

**SARAH** – I'm not sure where you are going with this - but continue.

**JUDGE** – Without those straggling weak slow cells ... our brains operate more efficiently.

**SARAH** – Judge I think you have had one drink too many. Buffalo? Really.

**JUDGE** – (*impatiently looking at his pocket watch*) Where is that daughter of mine? She may have missed this train, but there is always another one tomorrow. Maybe she's in one of the many saloons and beer halls in town. If you'll excuse me, I best check them all until I find her.

(*The JUDGE EXITS*)

**SARAH** – I'll better come with you Judge to make sure you don't cull your herd of buffalo too much.

(*The JUDGE and SARAH ENTER.*)

(*SALLY sneaks from behind the Water Tower to the Jail. She carries a carpet bag with Justin's gun, badge, and the note.*)

**JUSTIN** – My Sally!

**SALLY** – I brought you this fig marmalade sandwich to eat.

(*SALLY hands JUSTIN a sandwich wrapped with a bow*)

**JUSTIN** – Thank you kindly. (*taking a bite*) I was getting a might hungry. What is the rest of the town saying?

**SALLY** – I am sorry to say that you have a lot of well-wishers.

**JUSTIN** – Well-wishers ... that doesn't sound so bad?

**SALLY** – Unfortunately, they wish to throw you down a well.

**JUSTIN** – I started out with nothing and still have most of it left.

(*PAIGE TURNER ENTERS and holds up a cue-card*)

**CUE-CARD** – *That's just so sad!* (*PAIGE EXITS*)

**JUSTIN** – I recon' the only one I can count on is you Sally.

**SALLY** – Justin ... you just couldn't have killed that desperado ... I was with you the entire time. Remember?

**JUSTIN** – Come to think of it. You're right! I couldn't have done it.

**SALLY** – That's what I've been trying to tell you!

**JUSTIN** – And since I can't prove that I'm innocent from behind these jail house bars.

*(JUSTIN steps out from behind the bars.)*

**SALLY** – Oh my goodness ... is this a "jail break"?

*(They Hug and SALLY gets ready to kiss JUSTIN, but he needs to save the town, so he places a finger on her lips as she leans in.)*

**JUSTIN** – No time for that right now. I've got a town to save! I always say that doing what's right ... is what makes the difference between a hero and a villain. Sally ... go get my badge and gun.

**SALLY** – I brought them with me, just in case ... and that "note" too.

**JUSTIN** – Let's have a closer look at that "to do list" again ... there was something that just wasn't right about it. *(looking closely at the note)* What are these initials here on the bottom ... hummm? P and M? I wonder what P and M stands for?

**SALLY** – Could it be the Pro-of...

**JUSTIN** – *(interrupting)* That is what I am looking for ... proof. Nighttime is called PM isn't it?

**SALLY** – Justin ... maybe the initials stand for Professs ...

**JUSTIN** – *(interrupting)* What was I thinking? It's all so clear ... those initials are the initials of (beat) ... the Post Master ... he must be the one behind all of this ... I'm sure of it.

**SALLY** – Or maybe Professor Mack ... the scoundrel and villain. *(Pulling out the playbill and handing it to Justin)*

**JUSTIN** – Or maybe Professor Mack the scoundrel and villain.

**SALLY** – *(mug to the audience)* How brilliant of you.

**JUSTIN** – Thank you ... now if I only knew where he was.

*(PROFESSOR steps out from the Saloon on to the street)*

*(Pulling out his Peacemaker JUSTIN confronts the PROFESSOR)*

**JUSTIN** – Professor Mack ... I'm placing you under arrest for ... well ... for so many things ... I've got to make a list.

**PROFESSOR** – On what proof?

*(At the point a crowd is coming from the Saloon.)*

**JUSTIN** – Proof? ... On the proof that your exact initials P and M are monogrammed on the dead desperado's incriminating "To Do List"!

**PROFESSOR** – For all we know that stands for Post Master.

**JUSTIN** – *(to SALLY)* See Sally ... I told you ... Post Master ... *(SALLY gives him a firm look and encourages him to continue.)*

**SALLY** – You were saying ...

**JUSTIN** – Oh yes. As I was saying ... P.M. stands for Professor Mack AND you ... ahhh? ... wanted to get the gold from the train depot's safe. Yep ... that must be it!

*(A crowd gathers to listen to JUSTIN and the PROFESSOR)*

**PROFESSOR** – Nope ... already checked. No gold to speak of.

**JUSTIN** – Well then, maybe you wanted to ... ahhh ... get me out of the way so you could ... ahhh ... run for sheriff in the next election.

**PROFESSOR** – That is the most ridiculous thing I have ever heard!

*(CLAIRE steps forward and approaches JUSTIN)*

**CLAIRE** – *(to JUSTIN)* The next thing you'll be telling us is that the Professor is behind all this and the only reason he framed you is to so that he can buy the town for pennies on the dollar like he already did in old Silveyville.

*(CLAIRE pauses quickly to look around at the crowd listening.)*

**CLAIRE** – Drat! I guess I shouldn't have said that ... should I?

**PROFESSOR** – *(upset)* You think? While you're at it why not tell them that this is the culmination of years of planning and it's why the train tracks just happened to be redirected three and a half miles away from Silveyville and it became so important to move the entire town to this spot. and I've done all this because Silveyville and, to a lesser degree, this town is built over a fortune in crude oil! *(pause)* Drat! I guess I shouldn't have said that either?

**EVERYONE** – *(Gasps! Or says Oh My!)*

**SAHAH** - *I always wondered why the entire town got put on rollers and moved to this new spot near the new depot.*

**(SOUND EFFECT** – *Palomitas is heard neighing and prancing.)*

**JUSTIN** – “Crude oil”? ... The only oil in Dixon is “olive oil”. You have to go to Santa Barbara for that other kind of oil. “Crude oil”. Where in blue blazes would you get a lame-brained idea like that?

**PROFESSOR** – No oil? Well ... I have the proof right here. See.

*(The PROFESSOR holds up the vial marked “Oil” for all to see as BETTY DIDENT steps forward to take the vial from him and walks over to CLAIRE to ask her a question while showing the vial to the audience as she walks over.)*

**BETTY** – Soooo ... I was wondering where my fancy French perfume bottle went off to. Didn't you borrow this from me Claire?

**CLAIRE** – *(as a loud proclamation)* Why Yes! Yes I did. I knew the Professor wouldn't come back to town unless there was an evil scheme. Soooo ... I made sure this vial made its way to him.

**EVERYONE** – *(Gasps!)*

**PROFESSOR** – I never would have expected you to be so ... so ... “villainous” Claire! *(beat)* Actually ... I kind of like it.

*(CLAIRE gently throws the PROFESSOR a kiss)*



**PROFESSOR** – *(ASIDE)* Why is it that things just never go as expected in this blasted one-horse town?

*(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS AND HOLDS UP A CUE-CARD)*

**CUE-CARD** – Boo! Hiss! *(PAIGE stays around this time)*

*(SOUND EFFECT – Palomitas is heard neighing and prancing.)*

*(SOUND EFFECT – Three blasts of a train whistle)*

**CLAIRE** – *(to everyone)* Drat! I suspect it's time for you to make one of your customarily hasty exits.

**PROFESSOR** – Normally I would agree with you ... but other than my wanting to purchase this town to add to all the land I bought in old Silveyville ... there is no real evidence for a crime that you can charge me with Sheriff.

**DOC** – He's got a point there.

**JUSTIN** – What about the dead desperado?

**PROFESSOR** – I found him that way. And just happened to drop him and a note in the general vicinity of the jail house. No law against clumsiness and being a good citizen.

**DOC** – He's got a point there too.

**CLAIRE** – And Dixon is a whole lot easier to spell than Silveyville ... so I guess that whole move the town scheme wasn't so bad after all? Right everyone?

*(No answer from the townfolks)*

**CLAIRE** – I said ... right everyone?

**JUDGE** – I suppose she's got a point there.

**EVERYONE** – *(begrudgingly)* Well ... I guess so.

**DOC** – So Mr. Pro-fessor ... looks like you own a whole lot of good for nothing useless land now ... and with Justin as our new sheriff to bring law and order to Dixon ... it doesn't look like any of us are going anywheres anytime soon.

**PROFESSOR** – You’ve not seen the last of Professor Mack. And in case you are wondering ... I am going over to my hotel to get something to eat. It has been a very disappointing day.

*(JUSTIN puts his arms out to hold people back)*

**JUSTIN** – Don’t try to follow him folks.

**SALLY** – What are you talking about ... he’s just going to make a sandwich. And we know where he’s going if we want to find him.

**JUSTIN** – That’s right everyone ... we know where he’s going if we want to find him. What’s the worst that can happen.

**DOC** – I think the kitchen at the Centennial is closed at this hour... so it will be an even more disappointing day. *(laughing)*

**PROFESSOR** – I know my way around a stove and who will really care if I use the kitchen to make myself some bacon and eggs ... yes bacon and eggs sounds egg-sellent.

*(The PROFESSOR EXITS)*

*(The JUDGE walks over to apologize to JUSTIN)*

**JUDGE** – I suppose that this town owes you an apology Sheriff. I terribly underestimated you, son. No offense intended.

*(The JUDGE offers his hand and JUSTIN shakes it)*

**JUSTIN** – You mean that whole accusing me of murder and believing the word of that no-good professor instead of me as the town sheriff ... (a moment as he stares at the JUDGE) Of course no hard feelings Judge. Like I always say ... “Oil’s well that ends well”.

**SALLY** – *(to JUSTIN)* You’ve been waiting all Act two to say that line, haven’t you?

**JUSTIN** – Actually ... yes ... yes, I have.

*(MUSIC STARTS)*

**SALLY** – If I don’t miss my guess ... I hear a song comin’ on.

*(Sally walks over towards JUSTIN as the cast gathers ... to sing the chorus of the song that began the play.)*

**SONG – There’s A Place That I Know**

Everyone sings this Reprise from Act 1  
Words by Gene Buck and Gary McCarver  
Music by Dave Stamper

**CHORUS**

There’s a place that I know ...  
where the sweet waters flow.  
Where the sky is so clear and blue.  
It’s a place far from care  
and I want to go there ...  
and I bet you’ll want to go there too!  
Where the people you meet  
as you walk down the street  
are like family and know your name.  
Pack your bags ... come away.  
I know you’ll want to stay.  
Where the people will greet you  
and folks are glad to meet you.  
It’s the town that we call ... Dixon!

*(Optionally repeat the chorus)*

*(CLAIRE walks over to the JUDGE, looping her arm in his arm and then begins to slowly walk towards the Saloon door where the rest of the crowd is heading ... except for SALLY and JUSTIN.)*

**JUDGE** – In all that excitement ... I seem to have worked up a bit of a thirst.

**SARAH** – Why does that not surprise me?

**CLAIRE** – Judge ... that can be easily remedied. I happen to know someone who owns a saloon.

**JUDGE** – Claire ... I thought you’d never ask. *(a quick laugh)* That color you are wearing suits you very well ... if I must say.

**CLAIRE** – How kind of you Judge.

*(The JUDGE takes the arms of both SARAH and CLAIRE and proceeds through swinging doors into the saloon)*

**JUDGE** – I think this ... is the beginning of a beautiful friendship.

*(Everyone EXITS except JUSTIN and SALLY who remain.)*

**(SOUND EFFECT** – *A train whistle wails off in the distance.)*

**SALLY** – I guess now that all the excitement in town is over, you'll be heading off again on that next cattle drive.

**JUSTIN** – No need. I only was away so long was just to save up money for an important purchase I needed to make. Besides, now that I's sheriff in town ... I can't leave my best girl unprotected. That is ... if you'll have me?

**SALLY** – Is that a proposal?

*(JUSTIN pulls a sparkly diamond wedding ring from his pocket.)*

**JUSTIN** – Why do you think I went on all those cattle drives ... I needed to save up money for this.

**SALLY** – Oh! My!

*(PAIGE returns with one last Cue-Card)*

**CUE-CARD** – *Oh! My! (PAIGE EXITS)*

*(JUSTIN puts the ring on SALLY's finger.)*

**JUSTIN** – Well.

**SALLY** – Yes ... Yes ... of course.

**JUSTIN** – I was really hope'n you'd say that!

*(JUSTIN and SALLY MANDER embrace and finally kiss, but the kiss is covered by JUSTIN's hat so that the audience doesn't see it as the cast peeks from a saloon window.) (MUSIC STARTS)*

**THE NARRATOR** – *Well that about wraps it up folks. You'd think that everything was all tied up pretty as a package with a bow on it. Too bad that Professor is not as good of a cook at he thinks he is, and he starts a fire in that Centennial kitchen that near burns down most of the town. But ... that as they say ... is another story.*

## CURTAIN CALL SONG

(The cast enters back on stage singing and taking their bows)

### **SONG – ‘Till You Visit Again**

Words by Jack Drislane & Gary McCarver

Music by Chris Smith

### **VERSE**

We've come to the end of our story.  
It's sad but our time's now through ...  
reliving bygone days of glory  
of heroes and villains with you.  
There's time set aside just for dreamin'.  
And time for things you've gotta' do.  
We're glad we spent this time together ...  
to share songs and laughter with you.

### **CHORUS**

After each melodrama ends ...  
After all of the fun is through.  
After all of our over-acting ...  
Every shameless plug we brought to you.  
It's that old story told again ...  
that heroes still win in the end.  
As you step through that door ...  
plan to come back once more ...  
we'll be saving a seat here for you.

**EVERYONE** – Goodnight everybody!

*(Everyone waves goodbye after one final bow and then EXITS)*

**FINAL FADE TO BLACK**

## **PROPERTY LIST**

### **recommended Props & Set Dressing**

Bad puns and over the top acting are one thing ... but "Wardrobe is really what really makes the Melodrama". Get creative!

There are countless sources for clothing and props that are appropriate for the late 1800s. Here are a few of the author's favorites. Stick with top quality brands like Wah-Maker, Frontier Classics or Scully. The Professor has a top hat and a black frock coat. Most men wear old west laped vests or suspenders and just about everyone has a hat of some kind. Ladies dress in Victorian style western wear or wear fancy saloon singer corsets and lace.

**[www.wmmerc.com](http://www.wmmerc.com)**  
**[www.texasjacks.com](http://www.texasjacks.com)**  
**[www.gentlemansemporium.com](http://www.gentlemansemporium.com)**  
**[www.westernstageprops.com](http://www.westernstageprops.com)**  
**[www.villagehatshop.com](http://www.villagehatshop.com)**

Most of what you will need in the way of props for the Broken Badge can be found in any established theatre's prop room, except you might need to rustle up a two person "pantomime horse" costume or a realistic horse head depending upon how you want to portray the hero's horse "Palomitas". You could even play it as an imaginary horse ... it's up to you.

Be sure to visit: **[www.heroandvillain.com](http://www.heroandvillain.com)**  
for pictures, and more melodrama scripts,  
and even free melodramatic resources.

## **SOUND EFFECTS FOR OLD TIME MELODRAMA**

Throughout the Melodrama we have put many cues for sound effects and a couple of “all abords” from an unseen conductor. Off stage cast members can do the sound effects or you can cast a sound effects wizard if desired to do all of the special sound effects. Sound effects listed in the script are the suggested minimum and you will find numerous places for additional humorous effects.

### **CRACKLING CAMPFIRE:**

Quietly and randomly crinkle a large plastic bag at a microphone.

### **DOG BARKING/ COYOTE HOWLING/ OWLS HOOTING:**

Go ahead and vocalize it ... we know you want to. “Rarf Rarf Rarf!” “Ah-woooo” “Hoot Hoot Hoot”.

### **THE HERO’S FAITHFUL HORSE “PALOMITAS”:**

Start practicing your neighing and whinnying.

### **GALLOPING, TROTting, WALKING HORSES:**

Use coconut shells in gravel hoof box. You can also use plastic cups the type that fast food restaurants serve. Use them on a table or a book or on top of some pea-sized gravel. You “gallop” with a cup in either hand using a triplet rhythm. Think: gid-dy-UP, gid-dy-UP, gid-dy-UP, gid-dy-UP, gid-dy-UP which most people associate with a horse.

### **TRAIN WHISTLE:**

Go ahead and buy one from an online toy shop.

## **ADDED BONUS**

### **A QUICK GUIDE TO Melodramatic ACTING**

Melodrama is essentially a theatre of emotions - an exuberance of emotions rather than the more realistic motivations we normally experience in life on stage.

**Anger** – The actor's hands are both shoulder high ... eyebrows are pushed toward each other ... with the actor's face tense with a grimace ... hands in tight fists.

**Fear** – The actor's face is turned to the right side... eyes wide ... with the right hand to the mouth, fingers curled under touching the top of the palm.

**Grief or Sorrow** – The actor's shoulders rounded ... head down and hands cupping the face. Shoulders rise up and down ... with an optional sobbing noise.

**Love (Male)** – The actor's chest is held high with his right hand crossing the chest and resting upper left over the heart - opening out to the right and his loved one.

**Love (Female)** – The actor's chest is held high with her head cocked a bit to one side the opposite leg goes out with foot pointed ... hands under the chin ... fingers entwined and bent at the first and second knuckles (almost praying), hands then go out towards her beloved with a broad beaming smile.

**Villainous Scheming** – One eyebrow up, the other down, a grimace on the face and hands rubbing together. If it is a really good plan, the villain's fingers twiddle.

**Villainous Sneaking** – Shoulders hunched over, one arm raised to cover the nose on down, eyes free to shift around the room, legs bent on the cross of the stage. An exaggerated twirl of your black cape or duster as you enter and exit the room. Go ahead and have fun with it.

**Feeling Overwhelmed** – Chin up bringing the face to look up, one arm dropped limp to the side, the other hand open with palm towards the audience on the top of the forehead.



## **LIST OF CUE-CARDS USED**

All Held Up by Paige Turner – Our Cue-Card Maven  
(Cue-card are listed roughly in their order of first use)

### **Evening in Old Dixon – November 1883**

**Applause**

### **Meanwhile – Out on the Lonesome Prairie**

**Ahhhhh!**

**Next Morning in Dixon**

**That's just so sad!**

**Later that Day**

**Boo ... Hiss!**

**Shameless Plug**

**Davis?**

(or another local town to poke fun at.)

**INTERMISSION**

**Later that night.**

**Later that Day.**

**Oh! My!**

# CHARACTER NAMING

***“A rose by any other name ... would be just as thorny.”***

Unlike melodramas, plays, and musicals provided by other companies ... with a HeroAndVillain.com play you have the freedom (and permission) to rename characters or even the play itself to better match your venue, town history, or even your own peculiar sense of humor. Just be sure to keep it family-friendly and G-rated. Should your town have a seaport instead of a stage station or train depot ... feel free to make the modification. If you want a “tannery” instead of a “cannery” or an “orchard” instead of a “vineyard” ... go for it.

Melodrama is historically a platform for community involvement and people love local references. That is why the Cue-Card “shameless plug” is can be added several times during your performance to poke fun at local people, places or businesses. One such poke at a local town called “Davis” can be changed to any other town you wish.

As for character names ... additional choices can be found on the heroandvillain.com website should you need inspiration.

**Here are a few names if you wish to rename a character.**

Alan Rench	Harden Rock
Kylian Moore	Noah Way
Corey Publican	Owen Cash
Sal Ubrius	Pierce Hart
Adam Baum	Pierce Hyde
Hooker Crooke	Ray Zenz
Lance Boil	Richard Mann
Bill Foldes	Seymour Paine
Brighton Early	Stan Still
Chris Cross	Ty Coon
Mack Cash	William Wynn
Mack Money	Reed Toomey
Mack Power	Lou Scannon
Mack Moore	
Mack Green	
Forrest Green	
Foster Child	

## **ADDED BONUS**

### **A FEW VILLAINOUS HECKLER RESPONSES**

Here are just a few heckler responses that your resident villain can use to keep control of the performance when a barrage of heckles ensue. A comprehensive compendium of responses can be found online at <http://www.heroandvillain.com>

Not playing with a full deck? Heck, he's not even in the game!

I'm glad to see you're not letting your education get in the way of your ignorance.

A sharp tongue is no indication of a keen mind.

I can't seem to remember your name, and please don't help me! I'm not as dumb as you look.

Any friend of yours ... is a friend of yours.

He is always lost in thought -- it's unfamiliar territory.

I can't talk to you right now; tell me, where will you be in ten years?

I hear that you're a self-made man. It's nice of you to take the blame!

I like your approach, now let's see your departure.

I'd hate to see you go, but I'd love to watch you leave!

The trick, my friend, is to keep an open mind, but not so open that your brains fall out, my friend.

I'm busy working now. Can I ignore you some other time?

Look, don't go to a mind reader; go to a palmist; I know you've got a palm.

Some people don't hesitate to speak their minds because they have nothing to lose.

## **WHY PUBLIC DOMAIN MUSIC IS USED**

Here are a few reasons why the songs used in this Melodrama are derived from music with expired copyrights (i.e., in the Public Domain). Besides the fact that they “feel” right for the time period ... since they came from the late 1800s ... Under U.S. copyright law, any edition of sheet music that was first copyrighted before January 1st, 1923 is in the public domain in the U.S., even if the copyright was renewed, the book that contained the sheet music is still in the public domain as long as it was initially copyrighted before January 1, 1923. Prior to 1998, U.S. copyright law featured a "75 year" rule whereby copyright on a musical work lasted 75 years from the first year it was copyrighted. In 1998, that was changed to 95 years. However, the 1998 law was not retroactive and works that were out of copyright before the law was passed are still out of copyright and anyone is free to use its music and lyrics in the U.S. without permission.

Even though this manuscript is protected by copyright, since the songs were in public domain ... they stay there and cannot be copyrighted again in their original form. However, some of the lyrics share only a passing resemblance to the original works from which they were derived, and as such, the new lyrics written specifically for this play are protected. Any copyright notice in this manuscript is for the play content and modified lyrics only. There are many Web sites with enormous data bases of works in the Public Domain and that is where the songs selected for this melodrama were found. If however some work used as the basis for this Melodrama's music wound up in a purported Public Domain database by mistake, please inform the author and immediately actions will be taken to remove that song from future publications of this manuscript.

**MELODRAMA REHEARSAL TRACKS are available online  
visit [www.HeroAndVillian.com](http://www.HeroAndVillian.com) for details**

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
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Great American Melodrama**

## **DIRECTOR'S NOTES**

**THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE FOR THE CAST AND CREW TO  
MAKE NOTES REGARDING BLOCKING, CHOREOGRAPHY,  
AND MUSICAL DIRECTIONS FOR THIS MELODRAMA.**

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