

Poor Jud Is Dead
From the Musical "Oklahoma" (1943)
(testo di Oscar Hammerstein II / musica di Richard Rodgers)

[In Oklahoma, alla vigilia della sua inclusione tra gli Stati dell'Unione (che avvenne nel 1907). Il cowboy Curly McLain è innamorato della giovane Laurey Williams, e vuole essere il suo accompagnatore a un ballo serale che si terrà nel villaggio. Su Laurey ha messo gli occhi Jud Fry, un bracciante solitario e mentalmente disturbato. Laurey decide di accogliere l'invito di Jud, dal quale pure è intimorita, al solo scopo di contrariare Curly. Questi si reca da Jud, che, ossessionato da visioni, si lamenta di essere incompreso; Curly, nel duetto che qui si propone, gli suggerisce di suicidarsi, così tutti parleranno bene di lui. Alla fine del musical, Curly ucciderà Jud in una colluttazione e sposerà Laurie.

Con Oklahoma la storiografia fa iniziare la cosiddetta "Golden Age" del musical di Broadway: maggiore integrazione tra soggetto, musica e danza; maggiore libertà formale delle canzoni e scene con musica più ampie e articolate. In questa fase saranno invece meno frequenti gli hits, ossia le canzoni in grado di vivere autonomamente al di fuori dello spettacolo: un fenomeno, quest'ultimo, che aveva invece caratterizzato il ventennio 1920-1940].

Da *Oklahoma*, Atto I: "Poor Jud"

[Curly]

Poor Jud is dead

Poor Jud Fry is dead

All gather round his coffin now and cry

He had a heart of gold

And he wasn't very old

Oh why did such a feller have to die?

Poor Jud is dead

Poor Jud Fry is dead

He's lookin' oh so peaceful and serene ([Jud] and serene)

He's all laid out to rest

With his hands acrost his chest

His fingernails have never been so clean

[spoken]

Then the preacher'd get up and he'd say

"Folks, we are gathered here to mourn and groan over our brother Jud Fry

Who hung hisself up by a rope in the smokehouse"

And then there'd be weepin' an' wailin' --- from some of those women ---
Then he'd say, "Jud was the most misunderstood man in this territory
People used to think he was a mean ugly fella and called him a dirty skunk
and an ornery pig stealer

[Jud gives him a dirty look]

But

[sung]

The folks that really knowed him
Knowed that beneath them two dirty shirts he always wore
There beat a heart as big as all outdoors ([Jud] as big as all outdoors)
Jud Fry loved his fellow man ([Jud] he loved his fellow man)

[spoken]

He loved the birds of the forest
And the beasts of the fields
He loved the mice and the vermin in the barn
And he treated the rats like equals (which was right)
He loved all the little children
He loved everything and everybody in the world
Only . . . only he never let on
And nobody ever knowed it

[sung]

Poor Jud is dead
Poor Jud Fry is dead
His friends are weepin' wail for miles around ([Jud] miles around)
The daisies in the dell
Will give out a different smell
Because poor Jud is underneath the ground

[Jud]

Poor Jud is dead
A candle lights his head
He's layin' in a coffin made of wood ([Curly] wood)
And folks are feelin' sad
'Cuz they used to treat him bad
And now they know their friend has gone for good ([Curly] good)

[Both]

Poor Jud is dead
A candle lights his head

[Curly]

He's lookin' oh so purty and so nice

He looks like he's asleep

It's a shame that he won't keep

But it's summer and we're runnin' out a' ice

[Both]

Poooooor Juuuuuuud

Poooooor Juuuuuuud