



BEAR FAMILY RECORDS

tel +49 (4748) 8216-16 • fax +49 (4748) 8216-20 • email: heidi@bear-family.de

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ARTIST	VARIOUS
TITLE	Shit Happens!
	Songs Of Everyday Life
LABEL	Bear Family Records
CATALOG #	BCD 16633
PRICE-CODE	AS
EAN-CODE	 4 000127 166333
ISBN-CODE	978-3-89916-300-1
FORMAT	CD Digipac with 68-page booklet
GENRE	Country
TRACKS	25
PLAYING TIME	74:39



KEY SELLING POINTS

- An unprecedented collection of tragedy songs by the biggest stars of Country Music, recorded 40-50 years ago.
- Full lyrical transcriptions to make the experience even more overwhelming.
- A semi-serious essay on the history of the 'Shit Happens' tradition in country music.
- A collection of original drawings by Reinhart Kleist, and help preserve your mental health.

SALES NOTES

Welcome to a musical world where the worst imaginable things happen. This is a world inhabited by drunks, beggars, homeless people, dead soldiers, orphans. You name it. Nobody is safe. Little children are run down by automobiles in these songs. Even the family pet is fair game if there's a chance the dying pooch will wrestle a tear or two from the listener....

We have titled this collection 'Shit Happens!' It is a time-honored tradition. Even though it may make you laugh today, nobody had comedy in mind when they wrote or performed these songs back 40 or 50 years ago. This was deadly serious business. People actually considered these songs *entertainment*.

If you know the history of country music, you realize that the 'Shit Happens' genre got started well before these tracks were recorded. Just listen to the earliest country music by artists like Jimmie Rodgers, Bradley Kincaid or Vernon Dalhart. Their lyrics just oozed pathos. Children, parents and loving wives were slaughtered wholesale for the sake of family entertainment. Whether you call this music *schmaltz* or *kitsch* or tear jerkers, they're guaranteed to make you feel good about your own life by comparison. This is wretched excess. A dying guy by the railroad track imploring a stranger to turn his last few bucks into some pretty clothes for his long-suffering wife. These songs celebrate sadness for its own sake. The victims are ordinary people with fatal flaws. It's just a matter of time until the damage is done.

The tasteless, schmaltzy, maudlin streak in popular culture has never disappeared. It may get driven off the main highway, but that back road almost also leads to the bank. Here we present an unblinking, unvarnished look at the best of a horrible genre, or maybe it's the worst of a wonderful genre. Just keep in mind that these are not obscure artists recording for unknown independent labels. These are finely crafted songs and performances by the likes of Johnny Cash, Eddy Arnold, Porter Wagoner, Hank Snow, Webb Pierce and Red Foley, to name but a few. The fact that you don't know whether to laugh or cry is some measure of their success.

To help keep you from going over the edge we present an entertaining essay by music historian Hank Davis, as well as some wonderful illustrations drawn especially for this collection by Reinhart Kleist. Kleist's art offers some wonderful counterpoint to the overbearing pathos of the music. At the least, it will help you stay afloat through all this cloying sentiment. It may even make you laugh out loud while bringing some fresh insight into the lyrics.

Bear Family Records • Grenzweg 1 • 27729 Holste-Oldendorf • Germany
www.bear-family.de



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We bet you'll never think about Johnny Cash's *Give My Love To Rose* the same way after you've seen the accompanying illustrations. Record companies release theme-based compilations all the time. There are album/CD collections of train songs, truck songs, blues songs, songs about Texas. People listen to these collections from the first track to the last. But we guarantee nobody will be willing or able to stay put through this collection from start to finish. Even if you can laugh at these lyrics (and Kleist's art helps!), they'll wear you out. Just reading the words can exhaust you. Music like this was meant to be experienced in small doses, maybe two or three minutes at a time. A solid hour of this Shit Happening may put your mental health at risk.

So relax in your comfortable living room, pull up your well-upholstered chair and listen to these songs about someone else's suffering. Rest easily in the knowledge that nothing *this* extreme could ever happen to you. It's OK to snicker, even laugh out loud. Think of this as a comedy album. Remember, it's only tragedy when the 'Shit Happens' to YOU. When it happens to somebody else, it's entertainment!

TRACK LISTING

1. **EDDY ARNOLD** : Mommy Please Stay Home With Me
2. **PARTON & PORTER WAGONER**: Mommie. Ain't That Daddy
3. **HANK SNOW**: Don't Make Me Go To Bed And I'll Be Good
4. **GEORGE HAMILTON IV**: Little Tom
5. **DOLLY PARTON & PORTER WAGONER**: Jeannie's Afraid Of The Dark
6. **HANK THOMPSON**: Little Blossom
7. **HANK SNOW**: The Answer To 'Little Blossom'
8. **HANK SNOW**: The Drunkard's Son
9. **HANK SNOW**: Nobody's Child
10. **EDDY ARNOLD**: Did You See My Daddy Over There
11. **THE LOUVIN BROTHERS**: Mother I Thank You For The Bible You Gave
12. **HANK SNOW**: The Blind Boy's Dog
13. **HAL LONE PINE & BETTY CODY**: O Lord Please Tell Me, Do
14. **TED HARRIS**: Pickin' Flowers
15. **WEBB PIERCE & RED SOVINE**: Little Rosa
16. **JIM REEVES**: Mother Went A-Walkin'
17. **JOHNNY CASH**: Give My Love To Rose
18. **WEBB PIERCE**: The Hobo and the Rose
19. **RED FOLEY**: Old Shep
20. **HAL LONE PINE**: Dear Sister
21. **JOHNNY HORTON**: Another Woman Wears My Wedding Ring
22. **PORTER WAGONER**: The Cold Hard Facts of Life
23. **ED BRUCE**: Tiny Golden Locket
24. **FERLIN HUSKY**: Drunken Driver
25. **PORTER WAGONER**: The Carroll County Accident