

A BOY NAMED SUE

97

Words and Music by
SHEL SILVERSTEIN

Moderately Bright



Verse I
(Recitative)



Well, my daddy left home when I was three, and he didn't leave much to



ma and me, Just this old guitar and an empty bottle of booze.



Now, I don't blame him because he run and hid, but the meanest thing that he



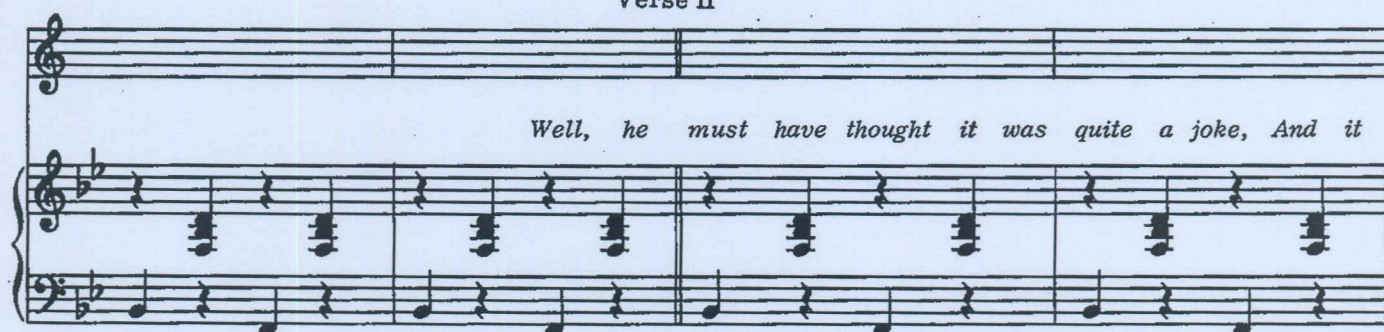
Edim F7 Eb

ever did was be - fore he left, he went and named me Sue. —



Verse II

Well, he must have thought it was quite a joke, And it



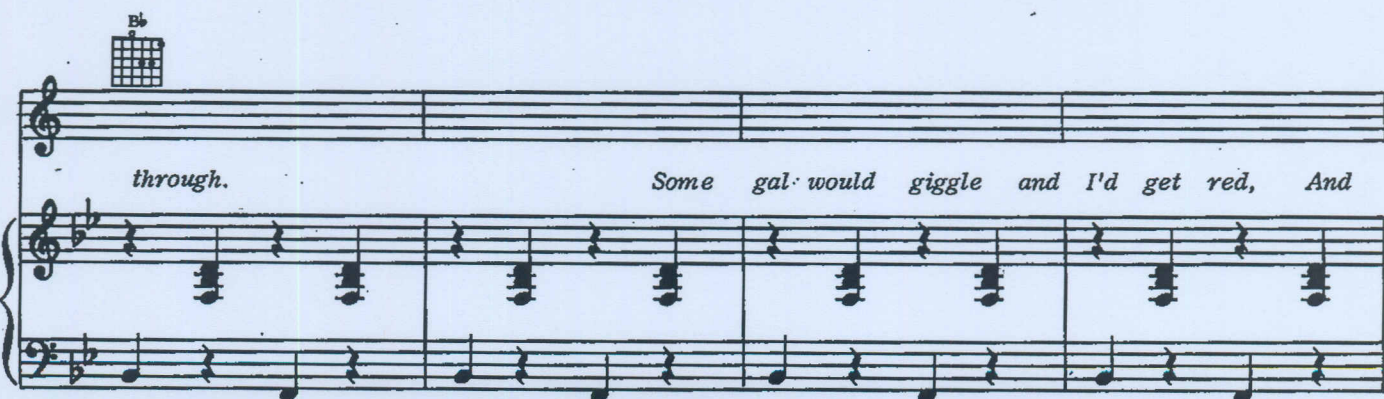
Eb Edim F7

got lots of laughs from a lots of folks, It seems I had to fight my whole life



Eb

through. Some gal would giggle and I'd get red, And



E \flat Edim F7

some guy would laugh and I'd bust his head, I tell you, life ain't easy for a boy named

E \flat

For Repeats (To additional verses) Last time

Sue. — Well,

3. (Well,) I grew up quick and I grew up mean, My fist got hard and my wits got keen.
Roamed from town to town to hide my shame, but I made me a vow to the moon and stars,
I'd search the honky tonks and bars and kill that man that give me that awful name.
 4. But it was Gatlinburg in mid July and I had just hit town and my throat was dry.
I'd thought I'd stop and have myself a brew. At an old saloon on a street of mud
And at a table dealing stud sat the dirty, mangy dog that named me Sue.
 5. Well I knew that snake was my own sweet dad from a worn-out picture that my mother had.
And I know that scar on his cheek and his evil eye. He was big and bent and gray and old
And I looked at him and my blood ran cold, and I said "My name is Sue. How do you do.
Now you're gonna die." Yeah, that's what I told him.
 6. Well I hit him right between the eyes and he went down, but to my surprise he come up with a knife
And cut off a piece of my ear. But I busted a chair right across his teeth. And we crashed through
The wall and into the street kicking and a-gouging in the mud and the blood and the beer.
 7. I tell you I've fought tougher men but I really can't remember when.
He kicked like a mule and he bit like a crocodile. I heard him laughin' and then I heard him cussin',
He went for his gun and I pulled mine first. He stood there looking at me and I saw him smile,
 8. And he said, "Son, this world is rough and if a man's gonna make it, he's gotta be tough
And I know I wouldn't be there to help you along. So I give you that name and I said 'Goodbye,'
I knew you'd have to get tough or die. And it's that name that helped to make you strong.
 9. Yeah, he said now you have just fought one helluva fight, and I know you hate me and you've
Got the right to kill me now and I wouldn't blame you if you do. But you ought to thank me
Before I die for the gravel in your guts and the spit in your eye because I'm the ----
That named you Sue."
- Yeah, what could I do? What could I do?
10. I got all choked up and I threw down my gun. Called him a pa and he called me a son,
And I come away with a different point of view. And I think about him now and then.
Every time I tried, every time I win and if I ever have a son I think I am gonna name him
Bill or George - - anything but Sue.