

Turn Me On Dead Man

Written By:

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INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

A sixties style recording studio.

JOHN (26), thin build, mop top hairdo, dressed in a leather jacket and sporting horn rimmed glasses and GEORGE (23), rail thin, floppy hair parted in the middle sit next to each other at a sound mixer.

SUPER: NOVEMBER 9th, 1966

JOHN

No, it's not supposed to be
cheerful, mate. It's a solemn song.
We need a C-minor chord. Like this.

John presses a button on the console. A somber PIANO sound is heard.

George takes a long drag on a cigarette. The smoke fills the air.

GEORGE

Nice, mate. You took a sad song and
made it better.

RINGO (26), dark floppy hair, with a very large nose bursts into the studio. He is visibly upset.

RINGO

Did you hear the news today?

JOHN

No, the Wednesday morning papers
didn't come.

RINGO

Paul is dead. There was a car
accident.

JOHN

What?

GEORGE

Where?

RINGO

Behind the shelter in the middle of
a roundabout. He didn't notice that
the lights had changed.

INT. BRIAN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A large residence on the outskirts of Liverpool. John, George and Ringo sit on a large sofa - nervous, fidgety.

BRIAN (32), jet black, clean cut hair, dressed in a black business suit with a glass of scotch in his hand, paces back and forth.

BRIAN

So, the police have taken the body to the morgue. No release of the identity yet. I'll make sure that doesn't happen.

GEORGE

How can you do that?

BRIAN

I know the press clerk at the station - sweet Loretta Martin.

JOHN

But there were witnesses.

BRIAN

Yes, a crowd of people stood and stared. They'd seen his face before. But no one was really sure.

JOHN

What about the funeral. Paul was Catholic for Christ sakes. That'll be public.

BRIAN

It won't. I've arranged for it to be secret. As we speak, Father McKenzie's writing the words of a sermon that no one will hear.

GEORGE

So, you really think that we can just replace Paul with a double?

BRIAN

It's doable. And it's the only way this band keeps making money.

GEORGE

Ringo, you haven't said a thing.

JOHN

He doesn't have a point of view.

GEORGE
Isn't he a bit like you and me?

John stands up and places his curled fist in George's face.

JOHN
I'm not like that.

GEORGE
Get back.

BRIAN
Settle down, John.

JOHN
(to Brian)
And I'm not doing this. I don't
give a damn about the money.

BRIAN
Really. Who finds the money - when
you pay the rent?

JOHN
(shouting)
What do you want?

BRIAN
Money. That's what I want.

Brian gulps back the rest of his scotch and slams the empty
glass on a counter.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
Now you all meet me at the studio
tomorrow morning. I'm bringing the
new Paul.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

John, George and Ringo are at opposite corners of the room,
each quietly strumming a guitar.

Brian enters with BILLY, (26), mop top hair, handsome in a
boyish way.

BRIAN
Boys, let me introduce you to the
one and only Billy Shears.

BILLY
Hello, mates.

GEORGE
My God, he looks just like him.

JOHN
I still don't want to do this.

Ringo removes a picture of Paul from his wallet

RINGO
(to the photo)
Sorry, Paul. All I got is a
photograph. And I realize you're
not coming back anymore.

BRIAN
Give it a chance, John.
(to Billy)
Why don't you sing *Please, Please*
Me for the boys.

INT. LIVERPOOL CONCERT ARENA - NIGHT

A darkened concert stage, curtains closed.

SUPER: ONE WEEK LATER

Stage lights scanned across the capacity crowd as they shout -
BEATLES, BEATLES.

INT. BEHIND THE STAGE CURTAIN - DAY

John, George, Ringo and Billy are dressed in identical, gray
collar-less suits. John, George and Billy have guitars
strapped around their shoulders.

Ringo nervously clasps his drumsticks.

Brian, in formal business attire, writes on a note pad. He
rips off a piece of paper and hands it to John.

BRIAN
That's the set you ought to go
with. It'll give Billy a chance to
get his feet wet.

BILLY
I'm a bit nervous.

RINGO
Just act naturally.

BRIAN
You can do this, Billy.

JOHN
You say yes. I say no.

John peeks through the stage curtain.

JOHN (CONT'D)
I still think this is a bad idea.

Brian goes over to John, places his hand on his shoulder and whispers.

BRIAN
You have to do it, John. Nothing's gonna change my world.

VOICE OF EMCEE (O.S.)
Ladies and Gentlemen - the
BEATLES!!!!!!!

The stage curtain opens and the band rushes on stage.

INT. LIVERPOOL CONCERT ARENA - NIGHT

John, George and Billy all strum their guitars in unison and take a bow.

The standing crowd roars their approval. John looks up - grabs a microphone.

JOHN
I'd like to say thank you on behalf
of the group and I hope we passed
the audition.

INT. BEHIND THE STAGE CURTAIN - NIGHT

Brian greets the band as they come off stage.

BRIAN
Great job, lads. Billy, you were
perfect.
(to John)
Why the long face? This is going to
work.

JOHN
Because suddenly, I'm not half the
man I used to be.

Ringo gives John a reassuring pat on his shoulder.

RINGO
Life goes on.

JOHN

I'm just not sure I can pull this off.

Brian gives John a stern look.

BRIAN

Boy, you're going to carry that weight a long time.

INT. NEW YORK APARTMENT - DAY

John (now 40), dark stringy hair wears dark horn rimmed sun glasses as he talks to George, (now 37), dark straggly hair with a goat tee and Ringo (now 40), with a grey peppered beard.

SUPER - DECEMBER 7, 1980

JOHN

And I do appreciate you being round.

GEORGE

Any time at all, all you've gotta do is call. I'll be there. You know that.

JOHN

It wasn't worth it, mates. Ringo, doesn't it eat at you?

RINGO

I've got to admit it's getting better. A little better all the time.

GEORGE

And you're a rich man.

RINGO

Baby, you're a rich man too.

JOHN

But that shouldn't be enough.

RINGO

I just don't get it, John. It worked.

JOHN

I know. It's just that there's a - um, there's this shadow hanging over me.

I can't forget what happened. I
can't live with what we did.

RINGO
Living is easy with eyes closed.

JOHN
But I can't keep them closed any
longer. I need to go to the press
with this. I'm going to tell the
dirty story to a dirty man.

GEORGE
When?

JOHN
I have a recording session
tomorrow. Yoko and I are going to
meet a reporter after we're done.
You both might want to find a
secluded place for awhile.
(beat)
I hope you both can find a way to
understand - to forgive me.

Ringo stands up, grabs his coat.

RINGO
I'd rather you let it be. But I'll
back whatever you decide.

George stands up.

GEORGE
Well, I was always waiting for this
moment to arise.

JOHN
Sorry, mate. I have to.

George leans over and gives John a kiss on his cheek.

GEORGE
(whispering)
I don't want you to carry this
weight on your shoulder. Do what
you need to.
(to Ringo)
Let's go. The man has a big day
tomorrow.

RINGO
I can imagine.

JOHN
Mates, you know it's going to be
alright.

INT. LIMOUSINE - NIGHT (MOVING).

A Chauffeur drives. John and his wife YOKO (47), Asian, are
in the back seat.

SUPER: DECEMBER 8, 1980.

JOHN
The reporter's going to meet us at
the apartment?

YOKO
Yes. I already called.

JOHN
You still okay with this?

YOKO
John, I know it's not easy. What
you are doing is brave. But I'm not
sure. I mean, the way things are
going....

JOHN
They're going to crucify me.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - NIGHT

John pulls his overcoat tight to protect from the winter
chill as he exits the limousine. Yoko exits from the other
door.

A disheveled looking young man (25) appears from the shadows.
He has a John Lennon album in one hand. A revolver in the
other.

FADE OUT.