

LEMON LOUIE

The crowd comes up on the site of a vintage jalopy. The hood is up and the ghost of "LEMON LOUIE" is busy wiping off the oil dip stick. A wrench, lying on top of a cloth rests near his hands. "Lemon" has slicked back hair, a cigarette stuck behind his ear, and wears rolled blue jeans, white socks and penny loafers, and a white t-shirt under a cool looking jacket.

LEMON: (wiping, singing) "She wore an itsy-bitsy, teeny-weeny yellow poka-dot bikini, ... (notices audience, smiles and sings) ... that she wore for the first time today" ... (motions to the audience), c'mon, sing with me ... "an itsy-bitsy, teeny-weeny, yellow polka-dot bikini, and in the water she wanted to stay." (hoots and hollers) Whoo-hoo! Cool song for cool times! Hey, don't make fun of my song. I talk to crash victims ... spirits comin' up today? They say you can't even understand the words of the songs they're singing now. (He walks, running his hand along the side of the car.) Ain't she a beauty? I bought this car when I was only 17 years old. My Pop helped, but I paid for most of it myself. And I earned all of the money right here on the ranch. Geez I might as well have lived on Limonera, I was around all the time. My uncle was a foreman, and his home here was nicer than mine in Santa Paula. This company took good care of their people, I can tell ya that. (Takes a step towards the audience.) I'll let you in on a secret. I was 13 years old when I started workin' in the fields. You had to be 16 by law, but when ya got connections ... piece a cake! Yeah, I worked as a picker. I was fast too. Got along with the guys real good ... all kinds of people from all over. I learned alot about the world in those fields. Then when I was older, I went to work in the packing plant. I LOVED working in the packing plant. Because there were lots of nice ladies. Geez Louise, I dated so many Limonera "beauty-cuties" the girls in town started callin' me "Lemon Louie." Then when my uncle was made supervisor, he moved me into the mechanics shop. I worked here at the pumps fixin' cars, tractors, field machinery. But the best part of that ... was free gas. What a deal that would be about right now huh? Hey, when ya got connections, piece a cake. (takes the cigarette from behind his ear) Anybody got a light? (if nobody offers, the guide will have a lighter and offer. "Lemon" laughs) Put it away, I'm kidding! What're ya nuts?! C'mon, think about it. Have you ever seen a ghost smoke? And at a GAS PUMP? It's just for looks. (He puts the cigarette back behind his ear and takes a "cool" stance. He again approaches the crowd.) Hey. On the count of three, everyone do this. (He snaps his

fingers.) One, two, three (everyone snaps with him. Lemon pauses, studying the crowd seriously for a moment.) That's how long it took for me to die. It was a frosty Halloween night, just like this one. Suddenly I lost control. I crashed and rolled my car off of Foothill Road. I was driving in from Ventura, coming here to a dance. Limonera Ranch dances were good times, let me tell you. The moon was full and probably I was drivin' too fast, but I raced on Foothill all the time. I knew it like the back of my hand. I don't know what happened. (He snaps his fingers) My death started a little ritual I noticed they still do today. My friends put a little cross by the highway where I wiped out. Well on your way home, go check out the 118 at Hitch Blvd. over in Moorpark. There are 7 crosses there right now. And they're all from the same family. I met their spirits about a month or so ago when they passed over. (He snaps his fingers) Happened like that. Some things never change huh? (He quickly changes his somber mood to a happy one. "Lemon" struts, showing off his jacket.) Hey, check this out. You like my jacket? It belongs to James Dean! Yeah, Daddy-O I'm telling you the truth. All of us crash victims in the spirit world have a car club to end all car clubs! So James Dean lent me his jacket for tonight's appearance. Well cool cats, I gotta get back to tinkerin' here, but thanks for the visit. Now Listen, I know these back roads are tempting, but don't be foolish. Buckle up, be safe and be cool. And I'll see ya later. ("Lemon" indicates heaven.) Later ... Limonera lemon lovers!

("Lemon" picks up the wrench and starts to mess with something under the hood as he goes back to singing.)

She wore an itsy-bitsy, teeny-weeny, yellow polka-dot bikini that she wore for the first time today ...(hums the remainder.)