

An aerial photograph of Armourdale, Kansas. The image shows a wide river flowing through the center, with several bridges crossing it. On the right side of the river, there is a large industrial complex with numerous buildings and structures. The left side of the river is more open, with some smaller buildings and a road. The background shows a hilly landscape with some vegetation.

# *Armourdale*

**THE KONTROVERSY**

W. L. H. H. H.  
H. L. H. H. H.

## 1. Armourdale

*The cast welcomes the audience to the show  
with this satirical celebration of their community*

Armourdale!

It's on the river Kaw

The home of Ma and Pa

Armourdale!

Come visit and you'll see

That river hospitality

Armourdale is home to me.

We're not glamorous

Like in Hollywood

But we are wondrous

In fact we are quite good

We don't have the charm of a gay Par ee

You will be alarmed by some of what you see.

We don't have a beach

Like in Trinidad

But the river's within reach

In fact it's not half bad

We don't have the pubs you'll find in Dublin

But there are many places to get drunk in.

There's not the open space that's in Texas

And blandness you will notice it in excess

If we make you shiver

Then that's just that

And don't let anybody call us river rat.

The Colorado mountains

Are unknown to us

And if you give us crap

You can expect a fuss

Fifth Avenue is someplace

We have never seen

Armourdale's the farthest

We have ever been.

## 2. We're Not A Family

*Luigi dies unexpectedly, leaving his immigrant  
wife and eight children.*

Dear Papa don't you know

We're not a family without you

And Papa what will we do

Now that we have to live without you

Wherever you are now, please don't forget us

We will never forget you

We're not a family without you

We know that you're gone and

You won't be around

To be happy when we're happy

And pick us up when we are down

They say you are in a better place

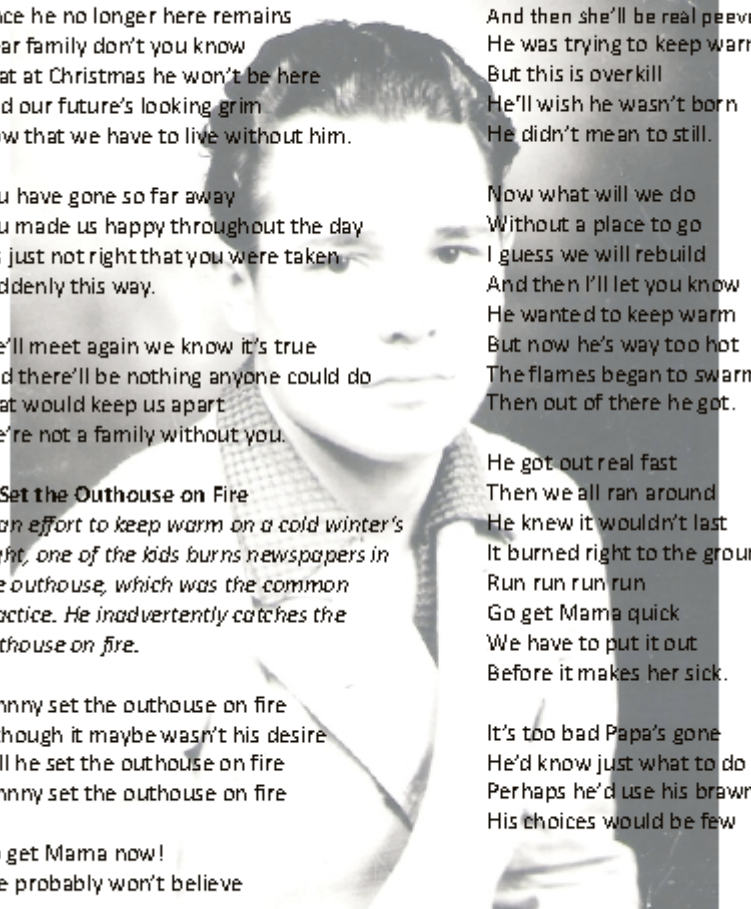
But can't they see we're not a family

Without you.

Dear family don't you know

Papa won't be here

To share our meals



And we will never be the same  
Since he no longer here remains  
Dear family don't you know  
That at Christmas he won't be here  
And our future's looking grim  
Now that we have to live without him.

You have gone so far away  
You made us happy throughout the day  
It's just not right that you were taken  
Suddenly this way.

We'll meet again we know it's true  
And there'll be nothing anyone could do  
That would keep us apart  
We're not a family without you.

### **3. Set the Outhouse on Fire**

*In an effort to keep warm on a cold winter's night, one of the kids burns newspapers in the outhouse, which was the common practice. He inadvertently catches the outhouse on fire.*

Johnny set the outhouse on fire  
Although it maybe wasn't his desire  
Still he set the outhouse on fire  
Johnny set the outhouse on fire

Go get Mama now!  
She probably won't believe

She'll want to know just how  
And then she'll be real peeved  
He was trying to keep warm  
But this is overkill  
He'll wish he wasn't born  
He didn't mean to still.

Now what will we do  
Without a place to go  
I guess we will rebuild  
And then I'll let you know  
He wanted to keep warm  
But now he's way too hot  
The flames began to swarm  
Then out of there he got.

He got out real fast  
Then we all ran around  
He knew it wouldn't last  
It burned right to the ground.  
Run run run run  
Go get Mama quick  
We have to put it out  
Before it makes her sick.

It's too bad Papa's gone  
He'd know just what to do  
Perhaps he'd use his brawn  
His choices would be few

But Papa isn't here  
He'd know just what to do  
He'd douse the fire with beer  
Before the flames renew.

#### 4. Down by the Tracks

*The Tortorilla family is struggling to survive the depression without their father's income. They need coal, so Assunta sends her two youngest children, Norma and Harold, to the railroad tracks to pick up some coal that has fallen off the railroad cars.*

Well I'm sittin' in front of the fireplace  
In the early morn'  
Although I'm by the fireplace  
It's not very warm.

I gotta go down by the tracks  
I'm gonna get my lump of coal  
And then I'll head back home  
Down by the tracks.

Work is hard it can break your back  
Life is rough when you live  
Down by the tracks  
We gotta have coal to keep warm  
So all the poor folks swarm  
Down by the tracks

Mama's at the stove in the kitchen  
Stirrin' a pot  
Tryin' to cook on a stove that's not very hot.

I'm gonna go down by the tracks  
We need heat so we can cook  
And so some coal we took  
From by the tracks.

We got no money you see  
But all the coal is free  
Down by the tracks

It's cold in our home you know  
So we gotta get some coal  
Down by the tracks.  
The engineer knows we're poor  
And so some coal he'll throw  
Down by the tracks

#### 5. Munch Your Troubles Away

*Bill Sanders operates a small grocery store out of the living room of his house. The neighborhood kids frequently come in and try to steal candy and other snacks.*

When you come in to our house  
You know exactly where you are  
Brother is eating some peanuts  
Sister a candy bar

Munch munch munch munch  
Munch your troubles away

The beer tastes good  
With the pretzels so thin  
We'll finish off the candy

Then we'll eat again

We'll get fat, we don't care  
If there's food, we'll be there.

We'll have a snack after dinner  
We'll have a snack after the snack  
We'll have ice cream for bedtime  
The refrigerator we'll attack.

#### 6. I Think About You All the Time

*As Assunta's son Angelo was growing up, he was always getting into trouble. Assunta worried that he didn't even bother to pray everyday. Angelo, now in the army, assures his mother in a letter that he is saying his prayers.*

I talk to you everyday  
You guide me along the way  
Your love for me is divine  
And I, I think about you all the time.

When I'm in need you always come through  
You help me know what to do  
You're always there for me on a dime  
And I, I think about you all the time.

You give me friends to help me get through  
Until the day I come home to you  
You're helping me stay right in line  
And I, I think about you all the time.

When I think about you, I just sigh  
Your love for me is so strong  
It makes me wonder why.

I know I'm not always good  
Don't do the things that I should  
But I'll say this and it's not a line  
That I, I think about you all the time.

When inspiration is what I need  
You give it to me and then I succeed  
Your love for me is so fine  
And I, I think about you all the time.

Eating breakfast or in my car  
When I'm at work or playing my guitar  
Thoughts of you come to mind  
'Cause I, I think about you all the time.

#### 7. Some Christmas

*Assunta dreams of a time in the future when she won't need to struggle to have the basic necessities of life.*

Some Christmas, things will be alright  
I'll be all warm and cozy  
By the Christmas tree's light  
Some Christmas, it's not just a dream  
There'll be a future Christmas  
When I'll have all that I need.

I'm not sad, in fact I'm glad



'Cause I know it will come true  
It won't be luck, I'll have some bucks  
Cause I'm doin', all I can do.

Some Christmas, things won't be so bad  
I'll look back on these hard times  
And the struggle I had  
Some Christmas, it's not just a dream  
There'll be a future Christmas  
When I'll have all that I need.

There'll be snow, the lights will glow  
Relaxing by a fire  
I won't be cold, I may be old  
I'll have the basics, no other desires.

I'm trying to cope, but I'm full of hope  
'Cause I'm giving it all I got  
I'll have health, perhaps some wealth  
It won't be much, but it will be a lot.

Some Christmas, it'll be some Christmas  
Then some Christmas, it will be.

### **8. Little Did She Know**

*Assunta's son Angelo has been killed in the war.*

Little did she know that in a field far away  
Her son lifelessly lies.  
Little did she know that her soldier boy  
Is the one who just died.

While she was doing her chores  
Sweeping the floors  
Her son was shot through the heart  
Didn't act very smart.

Little did she know that while other kids play  
Her son had seen his last day.  
Little did she know  
While she had dreams for him too  
Those dreams will never come true.

They'll send his dog tags  
They'll give her a flag  
She feels all alone  
He is not coming home.

While she was living her life  
Struggling just to survive  
The son that she bore  
Was not alive anymore.

She's waiting for him to come back  
To their home that is just a small shack  
She feels overwhelmed by the grief  
And wonders if there's no relief.

Little does she know  
That the sun will still shine  
As others will live their lives.  
Little does she know  
That her life will go on  
She'll be the one who survives.

He was in a trench  
Saw his friend had been shot  
Climbed out to get his revenge  
Ignoring what he was taught.

### 9. In the Indies

*Tommy, Bill and Mary's grandson, has joined the Navy. The men have received their orders to go to Panama. One of the men would rather go to the West Indies.*

In the Indies, the West Indies  
The Caribbean Isles, I'll do nothing but smile  
In the Indies, the West Indies  
Sippin' rum on the beach  
With my cares out of reach.

In the Indies, the West Indies  
That's the place I will go  
When I can't take no mo'  
In the Indies, the West Indies  
Listening to the steel drum  
All I can do is hum.

We're sailing on to Panama  
But that's not the place I want to see  
No I don't want that port of call  
I want to see Jamaica, Bahamas,  
Antigua, the Antilles.

In the Indies, the West Indies  
Take a load off my feet

Get some Mangos to eat  
In the Indies, the West Indies  
That's the best place to go  
To get away from the cold.

Around the world we have sailed  
But there's one place we haven't seen  
To go there, we have failed  
We haven't seen Tobago, Aruba,  
Barbados, the Antilles.

In the Indies, the West Indies  
Sit around and kick back  
Lose the stress and relax  
In the Indies, the West Indies  
We can swim in the ocean  
If we get such a notion.

In the Indies, the West Indies  
That's the place where I want to be

### 10. Great Things Are Gonna Happen

*Tommy tells his Navy buddies that he is taking leave to go home to marry Norma. One of his buddies tells him how he has his life all planned out for when he gets out of the Navy.*

Great things are gonna happen to me in my life  
I'll meet a girl, fall in love  
And then I'll have a wife.  
No more lookin' back the future's all I can see  
Great things are gonna happen for me.

Great things are gonna happen  
Great things are gonna happen for me  
No more of this stress  
Only happiness  
Great things are gonna happen for me.

Great things are gonna happen for me in  
my work  
I'll find a job, someplace where  
The boss ain't such a jerk  
I'll stay till I retire from labor I'll be free  
Great things are gonna happen for me.

Great things are gonna happen  
My music will be right  
I'll find a place for my band to play  
Each and every night  
Then one day when my life is over  
I'll meet the one who's my friend and  
brother  
Great things are gonna happen for me.

**11. A Good Song/I'm Devoted to You**  
*Back home in Armourdale, Tommy and  
Norma get married.*

I want to write a good song  
And dedicate it to you  
And it would be a happy song  
So you won't feel blue  
I'll sing it for you any day  
The whole day through  
I want to write a good song for you.

I want to make you happy  
And put a smile on your face  
And a twinkle in your eye  
A frown to replace  
I want to paint a classic  
To show my love will last  
You'll have a happy future and past.

A good song would be fitting  
Cause you make me feel so good  
A real life happy ending  
Just like it should, just like it should.

I'm devoted to you  
I'll be with you our whole lives through  
I'm devoted to you.

I'll take good care of you  
I'll make you happy our whole lives through  
I'll take good care of you.

I'll help you write that good song  
A new chapter in our lives  
I'll let you take me right along  
Just as your wife, just as your wife.

I want to write a poem  
Inspired from up above  
I want to write a sonnet  
And tell you of my love  
To do something fantastic  
To show you how I feel



I want to write a good song for real.

## 12. The Flood is Coming

*Heavy rains in July 1951 cause the Kansas River to rise. The people of Armourdale are ordered to evacuate as the levee is expected to break. Tommy is at work and must hurry home to get his family out.*

The flood is coming, the flood is coming  
Gotta get away before it is too late.  
The flood is coming the flood is coming  
Gotta get right out while people run about.

It's been raining for a month  
That's what the people say  
The water's rising really fast  
We gotta get away.

The water's rising really fast  
The levee's gonna break  
Gather only what you need  
For your family's sake.

This will be the biggest flood  
We've seen since 1903  
I don't know where we will go  
We'll have to wait and see.

Where do you think you're going man?

You are much too late.  
I've got to get my family out  
So they won't meet their fate.

Well hurry up and be right back  
Promise and I'll let you in  
You can bet that I will be right back  
Go ahead and tell your men.

## 13. Goodbye to Armourdale

*The flood has devastated the Armourdale district. The people must now find someplace else to live.*

Let's say goodbye  
To Armourdale  
We have to leave it now  
Let's hit the trail  
Let's shed a tear  
For Armourdale  
It was once our home but we had to bail.

The flood has come and gone  
But our lives will still go on  
We now have to leave  
But we'll get through our grief  
We'll miss the sights and sounds  
To a new home we're bound  
A change is round the bend  
Don't know the end.

We'll have our memories still  
But they won't pay the bills  
Don't know where we will live  
But something's gotta give  
Maybe we can rebuild  
The garden has been killed  
We'll stay with relatives  
That's how we'll live.

We'll have to find a home  
Till then we'll have to roam  
Don't care if it's a shack  
Someday we'll all be back  
We have lost everything  
We don't have much to bring  
We have our family  
As it should be.

Let's say goodbye  
To Armourdale  
We have to leave it now  
Let's hit the trail  
Let's say a prayer  
For Armourdale  
It was once our home  
But we had to bail.

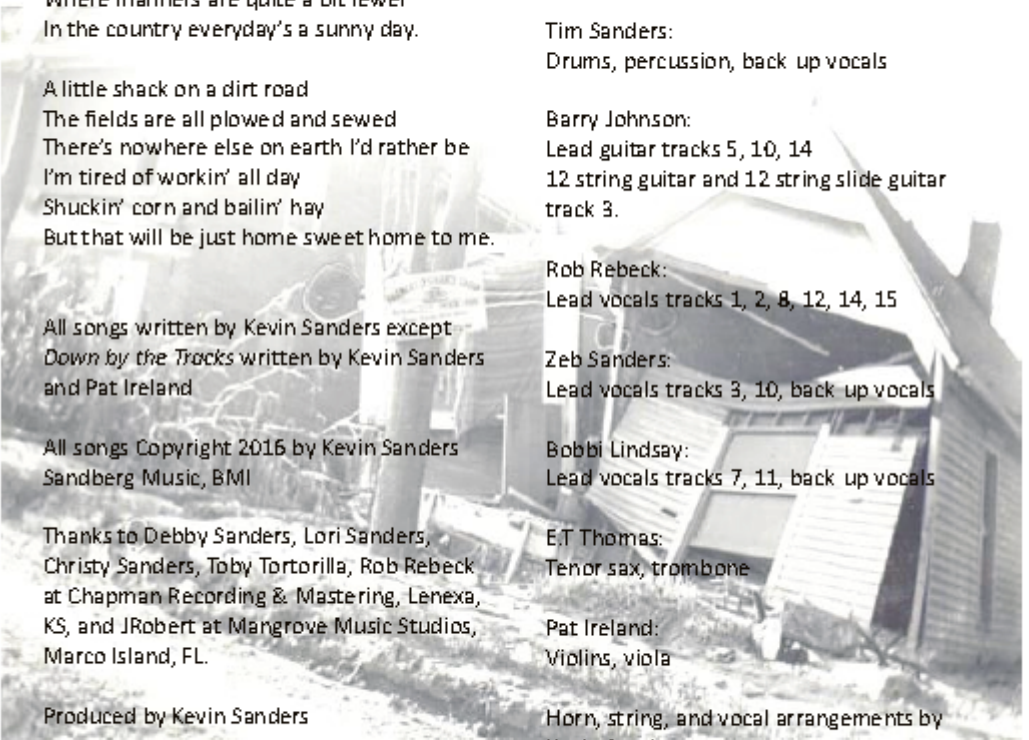
#### 14. Way Out in the Country

*Tommy and Norma's home has been destroyed by the flood and now they must find a new place to live. They dream of living in the country, perhaps Bonner Springs, Kansas, close to Tommy's maternal grandparents. They settle for a small, pre-fab house in another section of Kansas City, Kansas, called Argentine.*

I'm gonna move  
Way out in the country  
I'm gonna go where nobody can find me  
I'm gonna move  
Way out in the country  
Country living's just all right by me.

Well I'm just a city slicker  
Who keeps on getting sicker  
Of city smells and city ways of livin'  
So I'm movin' out of town  
Plant my feet on solid ground  
Where folks are a little more kind  
And a lot more givin'.

I'm gonna move  
Way out in the country  
I'm gonna go where the air is fresh and clean  
I'm gonna move  
Way out in the country  
Country living's just all right by me.



I'm gettin' away from filth and grime  
Safe from city crime  
Just sittin' in a field of new mowed hay  
The city's just one big sewer  
Where manners are quite a bit fewer  
In the country everyday's a sunny day.

A little shack on a dirt road  
The fields are all plowed and sewed  
There's nowhere else on earth I'd rather be  
I'm tired of workin' all day  
Shuckin' corn and bailin' hay  
But that will be just home sweet home to me.

All songs written by Kevin Sanders except  
*Down by the Tracks* written by Kevin Sanders  
and Pat Ireland

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Produced by Kevin Sanders

Photos pages 2, 4, 5, 10, and 11  
courtesy Toby Tortorilla

Kevin Sanders:  
Guitars, bass, piano, trumpet, banjo ukulele,  
slide guitar track 4, harmonica, back up  
vocals, lead vocals tracks 4, 5, 6, 9, 11, 13

Tim Sanders:  
Drums, percussion, back up vocals

Barry Johnson:  
Lead guitar tracks 5, 10, 14  
12 string guitar and 12 string slide guitar  
track 3.

Rob Rebeck:  
Lead vocals tracks 1, 2, 8, 12, 14, 15

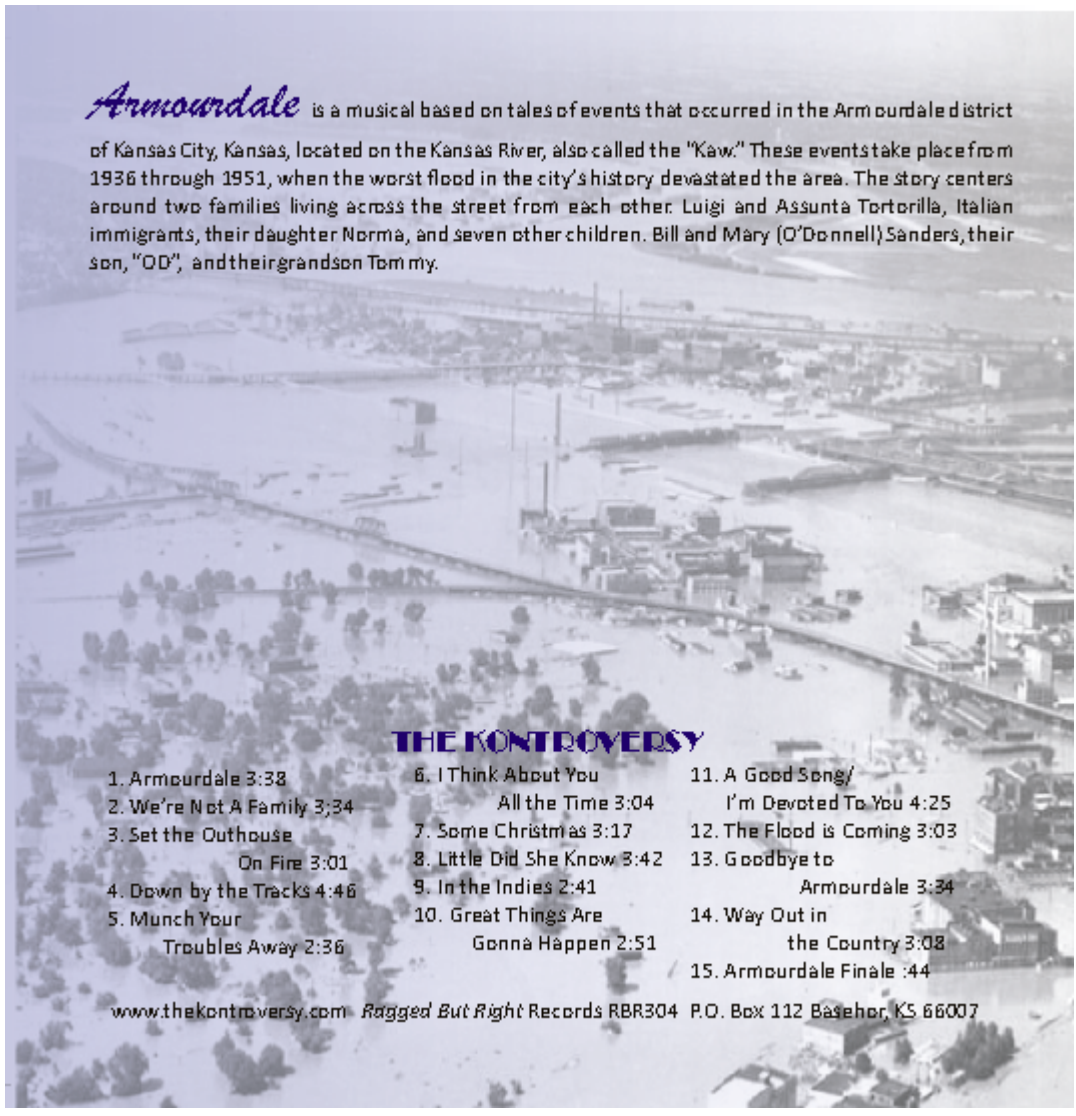
Zeb Sanders:  
Lead vocals tracks 3, 10, back up vocals

Bobbi Lindsay:  
Lead vocals tracks 7, 11, back up vocals

E.T Thomas:  
Tenor sax, trombone

Pat Ireland:  
Violins, viola

Horn, string, and vocal arrangements by  
Kevin Sanders



*Armourdale* is a musical based on tales of events that occurred in the Armourdale district of Kansas City, Kansas, located on the Kansas River, also called the "Kaw." These events take place from 1936 through 1951, when the worst flood in the city's history devastated the area. The story centers around two families living across the street from each other. Luigi and Assunta Tortorilla, Italian immigrants, their daughter Norma, and seven other children. Bill and Mary (O'Donnell) Sanders, their son, "OD", and their grandson Tommy.

## THE KONTROVERSY

- |                            |                             |                              |
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| Troubles Away 2:36         | Gonna Happen 2:51           | the Country 3:08             |
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