

The Last Gunfighter's Ballad

Guy Clark

The old gunfighter on the porch
stared into the sun
and relived the days of living by the gun
when deadly games of pride were played
and living was mistakes not made

and the thought of the smell of the black powder smoke
and the stand in the street at the turn of a joke
Ah, the smell of the black powder smoke
and the stand in the street at the turn of a joke

It's always: keep your back to the sun
and he can almost feel the weight of the gun
it's faster than snakes or the blink of an eye
and it's a time for all slow men to die
and his eyes get squinty and his fingers twitch
and he empties the gun at the son of a bitch

and he's hit by the smell of the black powder smoke
and the stand in the street at the turn of a joke
hit by the smell of the black powder smoke
and the stand in the street at the turn of a joke

Now the burn of a bullet is only a scar
he's back in his chair in front of the bar
and the streets are empty and the blood's all dried
and the dead are dust and the whiskey's inside
so buy him a drink and lend him an ear
he's nobody's fool and the only one here

who remembers the smell of the black powder smoke
and the stand in the street at the turn of a joke
remember the smell of the black powder smoke
and the stand in the street at the turn of a joke

He said I stood in that street before it was paved
learned shoot or be shot before I could shave
and I did it all for the money and fame
noble was nothing but feeling no shame
and nothing was sacred but stayin' alive
and all that I learned from a Colt 45

was to curse the smell of the black powder smoke
and the stand in the street at the turn of a joke
curse the smell of the black powder smoke
and the stand in the street at the turn of a joke

Now he's just an old man that no one believes
says he's a gunfighter, the last of the breed
and there are ghosts in the street seeking revenge
calling him out to the lunatic fringe
now he's out in the traffic checking the sun
and he's killed by a car as he goes for his gun

So much for the smell of the black powder smoke
and the stand in the street at the turn of a joke
so much for the smell of the black powder smoke

and the stand in the street at the turn of a joke