

# Lights Of Cheyenne

James McMurtry

Look off down the highway  
at the glittering lights  
Like windshield glass  
on the shoulder tonight  
As the diesels come  
grinding on up from the plains  
All bunched up like pearls on a string  
And I guess time don't mean nothin'  
Not nothin' at all  
And out on the horizon  
the broken stars fall  
Old broken stars they  
fall down on the land  
And get mixed together  
with the lights of Cheyenne

Well I've been up all night  
and I'm down on my back  
Workin' the counter  
to take up the slack  
'Cause the money tree's light  
and the whiskey stream's low  
You ain't worked a week  
since July

You say the gravel pit's hiring  
After the first  
But you don't have the  
nature for that kind of work  
You might get hired on  
But you won't make a hand  
And I'll still be here lookin'  
at the lights of Cheyenne

You stand in the sky  
with your feet on the ground  
Never suspectin' a thing  
But if the sky were to  
move you might never be found  
Never be heard from again

We go on good behavior when  
our youngest comes home  
She comes up from Boulder  
but she never stays long  
And that oldest still fights  
me like she was 18  
Stopped in for a 6-pack awhile ago

And she's got a cowboy problem  
And this last one's a sight  
All dressed up like Gunsmoke  
for Saturday night  
And they were off to the bars  
for lack of a plan  
Racing the stars to the lights of Cheyenne

And you've kept all that  
meanness inside you so long  
You'd fight with a fence post  
if it looked at your wrong  
Well the post won't hit back,  
and it won't call the law  
I look at your right,  
or I don't look at all

Now take a crumpled up  
soft pack and give it a shake  
Out by the dumpster on a cigarette break  
With one eye swelled up from  
the back of your hand  
And the other eye fixed  
on the lights of Cheyenne

You stand in the sky with  
your feet on the ground  
Never suspectin' a thing  
But if the sky were to  
move you might never be found  
Never be heard from again

Now there's antelope grazing  
in range of my gun  
Come opening weekend  
you won't see a one  
They'll vanish like ghosts  
'cause somehow they know  
But now they're up to the  
fence in the early dawn

And it's warming up nicely  
for this time of year  
The creeks are still frozen but  
the roads are all clear  
And I don't have it in me  
to make one more stand  
Though I never much cared f  
or the lights of Cheyenne