

Chattanooga City Limit Sign

Johnny Cash

I was thumbin' a ride one Saturday mornin'
Out of Nashville totin' my sack
I lent my car to a gal that lived in Chattanooga
And she hadn't ever brought it back.

She was drinkin' pretty heavy, when I let her have it
Hope she knows it was only a loan
Ain't no tellin' what I might have told her back at the time,
But that old car was also my home.

About five miles out I was gettin' kinda tired
Sweatin' hard and feelin' kinda weak
I woke up with no cigarettes or nothin' to drink
And I hadn't had a bite to eat.

My nerves was so quick I couldn't tell where I was shakin'
Then a set of brakes sang my song
Some fellow stuck his head out a '51 Chevy
And hollered "Hey man, come on."

I tole 'em I was headin' down to Chattanooga
They said hop in, we're goin' there too
And the way they took off in a cloud of smoke
I still ain't believin' it was true.

They had their windows down, and I was sittin' in the back
With my tongue still hung in my throat
He was hittin' just about a hundred and ten
And he said, "Man, what you think of this boat?"

Well, there was two semi's a-strugglin' up ahead
One tryin' to pass the other
They had the whole road blocked so he passed 'em on the right
And let me tell you somethin' brother.

I was so nervous my teeth was clickin'
There wasn't no way my head could think
Then the one that was sittin' on the passenger side
Turned and said, "Hey man, you want somethin' to drink?"

I just shook my head 'cause I couldn't talk
He said OK and then he said cheers
Them fools was drinkin' whiskey and wine
And chasin' it down with beer.

Well, I started sweatin' that old sticky sweat
And I know I was white as a sheet
Then one turned the radio on wide open
And said, "Hey man, check that beat."

By the time we reached the top of Monteagle
I thought I heard a rumblin' sound
And then I saw a sign that said 'FALLIN' ROCK'
And right there I was floorboard bound.

I was rollin' and squirmin' on the old floorboard
Too weak to sit or stand

And then the driver said "We're doin' a hundred and twenty
Look here man, no hands!"

I got up enough nerve to raise up and look
By now there couldn't be no surprise,
But his hair was blowin' all over my face
And dandruff blowed in both eyes.

He never did drive on the right or left
He just kept on ridin' that line
I rubbed my eyes and saw the prettiest thing
The Chattanooga City Limit Sign.

He slowed down and I said, "Mister please!
I'd like to get off right here"
He said, "Aw, ride on into town with us
We'e gonna go down n' pick up some more beer."

I said please once more and he stopped the car
And then he handed me my sack
Said they'd look for me on the road later on
(In) Case I wanted to catch a ride back.

I got out and sat down by the side of the road
Feelin' sick and lookin' mighty pale
I don't remember anything much after that
But next mornin', I woke up in jail.

I didn't know anybody in my cell,
And didn't wanta ask why I was there
But they all kept grinnin' and turnin' their heads
And it was more than my head could bear.

So I called the jailer and asked him to tell me
Why I was there, if he'd be so kind
He said, "For stoppin' traffic, while I was huggin' and kissin'
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