

Johnny 99

Johnny Cash

Well, they closed down the auto plant in Mahwah late last month

Ralph went out lookin' for a job but he couldn't find none
He came home too drunk from mixin' Tanqueray and wine
He got a gun, shot a night clerk, now they call him Johnny 99

Down at the part of town where when you hit a red light you don't stop

Johnny's wavin' his gun around and a-threatenin' to blow his top
When an off duty cop snuck up on him from behind
In front of the club Tip Top, they slapped the cuffs on Johnny 99

Well, the city supplied the public defender, but the judge was mean John Brown

He came into the courtroom and he stared poor Johnny down
Well, the evidence is clear, gonna let the sentence fit the crime
Ninety-eight and a year will make it even, Johnny 99

A fist fight broke out in the courtroom, they had to drag Johnny's girl away

His mama stood up and shouted, judge don't take my boy this way

Well son you got any statements you'd like to make
Before the bailiff comes to forever take you away

Yes, judge I got debts no honest man could pay
The bank was holdin' my mortgage, they was takin' my house away

Now, I ain't sayin' that makes me an innocent man
But it was more than all this that put that gun in my hand

And, your honor, I do believe I'd be better off dead
If you can take a man's life for the thoughts that are in his head

Then won't you sit back in that chair and think it over one more time

And let them shave off my hair and burn Johnny 99