

Johnny Got a Gun

Tom Paxton

Johnny's mum and dad both worked long hours, they worked on the weekends too

Johnny was eleven, but they had no notion of what Johnny was going through

Johnny got pushed and Johnny got robbed and it made him feel chicken to run

Big kids picked on Johnny every day, so Johnny went and got him a gun

Johnny got a gun, he didn't bring it home, he covered it with rags and dirt.

On his way to school he looked both ways, then he hid it under his shirt.

Johnny was afraid of going to school, there was always trouble in the hall.

Fights in the boys' room, guns in the lockers and little kids bouncing off the walls.

R: Johnny was afraid of dying young

Everybody he knew had a gun

So Johnny got a gun and every little thing looked cool.

First time Johnny flashed his gun everybody backed off fast.

Everybody treated him differently then. Johnny felt safe at last.

Johnny had a gun and everybody knew and everybody left him alone.

Till he bumped a kid who was coming down the stairs and the kid had a gun of his own.

The kid pushed Johnny, Johnny went down and the kid had something to say.

Pulled his gun, Johnny shot first and he blew the other kid away

The police came and took away the gun, said he wouldn't need a gun any more

Took him to the station, sat him in a chair and his feet didn't reach the floor.

R:

Johnny had a hearing plead self defence, prosecutor said no way.

Judge said "you're eleven, but you're killing like a man and it's gonna

be a long, long stay"

Johnny's mum and dad still work long hours and knock on the unit door

Sit with Johnny in the visitor's room and his feet don't reach the floor.

R:

And his feet don't reach the floor.