

Blue Wing

Corb Lund

He had a blue wing tattooed on his shoulder
Well, it might have been a bluebird, I don't know
But he'd get stone drunk and talk about Alaska
The salmon boats and forty-five below
He got that blue wing up in Walla Walla
And his cellmate there was a Little Willy John
And Willie, he was once a great blues singer
So Wing & Willie wrote him up a song

They sang, it's dark in here, can't see the sky
But I look at my blue wing and I close my eyes
And I fly away, beyond these walls
Up above the clouds, where the rain don't fall
On a poor man's dreams

They paroled blue wing in August of 1963
He moved north, picking apples to the town of Wenatchee
And when winter finally caught him, he's in a rundown trailer park
On the south side of Seattle where the days get grey and dark
And he drank and he dreamt a vision of when the salmon still ran free
And his father's fathers crossed that wide old Bering sea
And the land belonged to everyone, and there were old songs yet to sing
Now, it's narrowed down to a cheap hotel and a tattooed prison wing

He said it's dark in here, can't see the sky
But I look at my blue wing and I close my eyes
And I fly away, beyond these walls
Up above the clouds, where the rain don't fall
On a poor man's dreams

Well, he drank his way to L.A., and that's where he died
And there was no one to know his Christian name
And there was no one there to cry
But I dreamed there was a funeral; a preacher and a cheap pine box
And halfway through the sermon old blue wing he began to talk

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