

Laid A Highway

Tift Merritt

This was a town took care of it's own
That's what me and my children have known
I worked the mill the way my parents did
I remember this town when I was a kid
Sitting through the movies twice
Open windows late at night
Slipping out in the summer heat
To meet John Miller in the middle of the street

They laid a highway a few years back
Next town over by the railroad track
Some nights, I'm glad it passed us by
Some nights, I sit and watch my hometown die

I'm fifty-five and when the mill burned down
I wasn't much past a pretty young gal
Boss lit a match in the oily night
Cops never had enough to set it right
So while the company traded with our lives
We were busy watching that slow moon rise
Dancing on the dry grass bridge
Making love down by the Cedar County Bridge

They laid a highway a few years back
Next town over by the railroad track
Some nights, I'm glad it passed us by
Some nights, I sit and watch my hometown die

They never came to tear that old place down
They roped it off, but you can walk around
See the rust on the painted doors
Watch the rain fall through the burned out floors
This was a town took care of it's own
This was a town doing fine all alone
The mill got out a quarter to five
You could eat supper with any family you liked

They laid a highway a few years back
Next town over by the railroad track
Some nights, I'm glad it passed us by
Some nights, I sit and watch my hometown die