

# Burma Shave

Tom Waits

A licorice tattoo turned a gun metal blue  
Scrawled across the shoulders of a dying town  
Took the one-eyed Jackson across the railroad tracks  
And the scar on its belly pulled a stranger passing through  
He's a juvenile delinquent, never learned how to behave  
But the cops would never think to look in Burma shave

And the road was like a ribbon and the moon was like a bone  
He didn't seem to be like any guy she'd ever known  
He kinda looked like Farley Granger with his hair slicked back  
She says, "I'm a sucker for a fella in a cowboy hat"

How far are you going, he said, "Depends on what you mean"  
He says, "I'm only stopping here to get some gasoline  
And I guess I'm going that way just as long as it's paved  
I guess you'd say, I'm on my way to Burma Shave"

And with her knees upon the glove compartment  
She took out her barrettes and her hair spilled out like root beer  
And she popped her gum and arched her back  
Hell, Marysville ain't nothing but a wide spot in the road

Some night my heart pounds just like thunder  
I don't know why it don't explode  
'Cause everyone in this stinking town has got one foot in the grave  
And I'd rather take my chances out in Burma Shave

Presley's what I go by, why don't you change the stations  
Count the grain elevators in the rear view mirror  
She said, "Mister anywhere you point this thing  
It got to beat the hell out of the sting of going to bed  
With every dream that dies here every mornin'"

And so drill me a hole with a barber pole  
And I'm jumping my parole just like a fugitive tonight  
Why don't you have another swig and pass that car if you're so brave  
I wanna get there before the sun comes up in Burma Shave

And the spider web crack and the mustang screamed  
The smoke from the tires and the twisted machine  
Just a nickel's worth of dreams and every wish bone that they saved  
Lie swindled from them on the way to Burma Shave

And the sun hit the derrick and cast a bat wing shadow  
Up against the car door on the shot gun side  
And when they pulled her from the wreck  
You know she still had on her shades  
They say that dreams are growing wild just this side of Burma Shave