

## **Coward of the County**

Everyone considered him the coward of the county.  
He never stood one single time to prove the county wrong.  
His mama named him tommy, the folks just called him yellow,  
But something always told me they were reading tommy wrong.

He was only ten years old when his daddy died in prison.  
I looked after tommy cause he was my brothers son.  
I still recall the final words my brother said to tommy:  
Son, my life is over, but yours is just begun.

Promise me, son, not to do the things Ive done.  
Walk away from trouble if you can.  
Now it dont mean youre weak if you turn the other cheek.  
I hope youre old enough to understand:  
Son, you dont have to fight to be a man.

Theres someone for everyone and tommys love was becky.  
In her arms he didnt have to prove he was a man.  
One day while he was workin the gatlin boys came callin.  
They took turns at becky.... there were three of them!

Tommy opened up the door and saw his becky cryin.  
The torn dress, the shattered look was more than he could stand.  
He reached above the fireplace and took down his daddys picture.  
As the tears fell on his daddys face, he heard these words again:

Promise me, son, not to do the things Ive done.  
Walk away from trouble if you can.  
Now it dont mean youre weak if you turn the other cheek.  
I hope youre old enough to understand:  
Son, you dont have to fight to be a man.

The gatlin boys just laughed at him, when he walked into the barroom.  
One of them got up and met him halfway cross the floor.  
When tommy turned around they said, hey look! ol yellows leavin.  
But you coulda heard a pin drop when tommy stopped and locked the door.

Twenty years of crawlin was bottled up inside him.  
He wasnt holdin nothin back; he let em have it all.  
When tommy left the barroom not a gatlin boy was standin.  
He said, this ones for Becky, as he watched the last one fall.  
And I heard him say,

I promised you, dad, not to do the things you've done.  
I'll walk away from trouble when I can.  
Now please dont think Im weak, I didnt turn the other cheek,  
And papa, I sure hope you understand:  
Sometimes you gotta fight when youre a man.  
Everyone considered him the coward of the county.