

Three Poems



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Walking Down Broadway

My boy was singing before he could talk,
the words gibberish, but the tune pure
as a May morning. He loved Johnny Cash
best of all. I thought it was because
his name was Johnny, too.
I Walk the Line was his first song.
I spent my egg money on records.
He woke and slept to their rhythm.

He sang at church, then school, worked
in the fields to earn money for guitar,
microphone, amp. Everybody went wild
when he stepped on the stage.
Girls flocked around, some of them
never seen the inside of a church.

Before sunup one morning,
I heard the door latch,
found a note on the kitchen table,
Going to Nashville to sing on the Opry.
A few months ago, a couple from church
thought they saw him walking
down Broadway with his guitar.
He was wearing a cowboy hat.

Wet Is the Night
'S Fliuch an Oidhche
Scottish waulking song

Sitting at long tables, crews of Scottish women waulked* the wool for kilts, tweed jackets, warm blankets, beating wet wool to the rhythm of work songs:

wet is the night oo heel yo-ro
men of swift ships oh he-e ah voh
brushing dark rocks oo heel yo-ro
home to River Clyde boch-oh-reen-yo

*cleaned and shrunk

Walking After Midnight

*I'm always walkin' after midnight,
searchin' for you*

Don Hecht and Alan Block

I fell in love with Patsy Cline at Gaunt's soda fountain.
She served me a grilled cheese sandwich
and A&W root beer.
We talked till closing.
I walked her home.
Though I never passed her way again,
I have followed her always.
I saw her on the Arthur Godfrey show,
heard her sing about walking, searching for me.
I've listened to the record a million times.

They tell me the plane crashed.
All gone, pilot, Cowboy Copas, Hawkshaw Hawkins.
Patsy Cline to sing no more.

On moonlight nights, I go walking.
She hovers in the shadows, always just beyond.
Only the song lives on.