

Coward of the County

Written by Billy Ed Wheeler & Roger Dale Bowling

1. Everyone considered him the coward of the county,
He never stood one single time to prove the county wrong,
His mama named him Tommy but folks just called him yellow,
Something always told me they were reading Tommy wrong.
2. He was only ten years old when his daddy died in prison,
I looked after Tommy cause he was my brother's son,
I still recall the final words my brother said to Tommy,
Son my life is over but yours is just begun.

chorus 1: Promise me son not to do the things I've done,
Walk away from trouble if you can,
Now it don't mean you're weak if you turn the other cheek,
I hope you're old enough to understand,
You don't have to fight to be a man.

3. There's someone for everyone and Tommy's love was Becky,
In her arms he didn't have to prove he was a man,
One day while he was working the Gatlin Boys came calling,
They took turns at Becky there were three of them.
4. Tommy opened up the door and saw his Becky crying,
The torn dress the shattered look was more than he could stand,
He reached above the fireplace and took down his daddy's picture,
As his tears fell on his daddy's face he heard these words again.

chorus 1:

5. The Gatlin boys just laughed at him when he walked into the barroom,
One of the got up and hit him halfway cross the floor,
Tommy turned around they said "hey look ole Yellow's leaving",
But you coulda heard a pin drop when Tommy stopped and locked the door.
6. Twenty years of crawling was bottled up inside him,
He wasn't holding nothing back he let 'em have it all,
When Tommy left the barroom not a Gatlin boy was standing,
He said "this one's for Becky" as he watched the last one fall,
And I heard him say:

chorus 3: I promised you Dad not to do the things you've done,
I'll walk away from trouble if I can,
Now please don't think I'm weak, I couldn't turn the other cheek,
Papa I sure hope you understand,
Sometimes you gotta fight when you're a man.

coda: Everyone considered him the coward of the county.