

# Bruce Springsteen, Johnny 99

Well they closed down the auto plant in Mahwah late that month  
Ralph went out lookin' for a job but he couldn't find none  
He came home too drunk from mixin' Tanqueray and wine  
He got a gun shot a night clerk now they call him Johnny 99  
Down in the part of town where when you hit a red light you don't stop  
Johnny's wavin' his gun around and threatenin' to blow his top  
When an off-duty cop snuck up on him from behind  
Out in front of the Club Tip Top they slapped the cuffs on Johnny 99

Well the city supplied a public defender but the judge was Mean John Brown  
He came into the courtroom and stared young Johnny down  
Well the evidence is clear gonna let the sentence son fit the crime  
Prison for 98 and a year and we'll call it even Johnny 99

A fist fight broke out in the courtroom they had to drag Johnny's girl away  
His mama stood up and shouted "Judge don't take my boy this way"  
Well son you got a statement you'd like to make  
Before the bailiff comes to forever take you away

Now judge I had debts no honest man could pay  
The bank was holdin' my mortgage and they were gonna take my house away  
Now I ain't sayin' that makes me an innocent man  
But it was more `n all this that put that gun in my hand

Well your honor I do believe I'd be better off dead  
So if you can take a man's life for the thoughts that's in his head  
Then sit back in that chair and think it over judge one more time  
And let `em shave off my hair and put me on that killin' line