

Badlees, Song for a River

(Alexander/Naydock)

He was the king of the back seat
Of drunk reverie
Saw him escorted out of a Mets game
On network T.V.
Kept his head in the clouds
With any cheap high he could cull
In his cancered Impala
And his hog shirts
And his head tapes played dull

He lived in a company house
In the Pardeesville woods
With a stir crazy dog
And a graveyard of old "Jimmy" hoods
Sundays we'd run for his stash
At the New York state line
That summer when moments of
Circumstance altered like wine

(Chorus)

This is for the man
This is for the days that we killed
Was it my wind of change
Or just a breeze at the top of the hill
He didn't talk the gold ring
He just schemed for a skeleton key
But when you think you met thunder
You only see what your head wants to see

He threw back-mountain parties
Five deep at the "well";
With his girlfriend, Louise, who'd get lit
And tell us all "go to hell";
Then he'd get liquored up
And throw me the keys and yell "drive";
With him and Louise in the back
Doin' "American Pie";

He'd talk of out west over beer
And the garbage that we ate
'Bout the punk band he'd managed
In Phoenix in '78
I was this kid of sixteen the enamored
Impressionable kind
In the poetic pull of the passion
Of life with the lines

(Chorus)

He just disappeared that mid-August
Not even a shout
Then I read in the news that September
That his time had run out
How he tried to outrun a state trooper
Down 93 South
A charge of possession is why he fled
Said word of mouth

The paper said nothin' was left
But the seats and the frame
And I read in the write-up
For the first time his real name;

Birthplace unknown, not from nowhere
No close family
Just a wild river running
That cut it too fast to the sea

I still raise a glass once a year
On the night that he died
Though hindsight says
He only let me believe that we'd ride
Lord, he still taps a vein in my mind
Like a summer rain cools
Long after that river ran dry
And reality ruled

(Chorus2x)