Steve Earle & The Dukes, Billy Austin

My name is Billy Austin
I'm Twenty-Nine years old
I was born in Oklahoma
Quarter Cherokee I'm told
Don't remember Oklahoma
Been so long since I left home
Seems like I've always been in prison
Like I've always been alone
Didn't mean to hurt nobody
Never thought I'd cross that line
I held up a filling station
Like I'd done a hundred times
The kid done like I told him
He lay face down on the floor
guess I'll never know what made me
Turn and walk back through that door
The shot rang out like thunder
My ears rang like a bell
No one came runnin'
So I called the cops myself
Took their time to get there
And I guess I could'a run
I knew I should be feeling something
But I never shed tear one
I didn't even make the papers
'Cause I only killed one man
but my trial was over quickly
And then the long hard wait began
Court appointed lawyer
Couldn't look me in the eye
He just stood up and closed his briefcase
When they sentenced me to die
Now my waitin's over
As the final hour drags by
I ain't about to tell you
That I don't deserve to die
But there's twenty-seven men here
Mostly black, brown and poor
Most of em are guilty
Who are you to say for sure?
So when the preacher comes to get me
And they shave off all my hair
Could you take that long walk with me
Knowing hell is waitin' there
Could you pull that switch yourself sir
With a sure and steady hand
Could you still tell youself
That you're better than I am
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