

## Cash Johnny

# "Highway Patrolman"

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Written by Bruce Springsteen.  
( Bruce Springsteen.)  
From "Love, God and Murder", 1997, Columbia/Legacy.

My name is Joe Roberts; I work for the state.  
I'm a sergeant out of Perrineville: barracks number eight.  
I've always done an honest job; honest as I could.  
Got a brother named Frankie; Frankie ain't no good.

Well ever since we were young kids, it's been the same  
come down:  
I'd get a call on the shortwave; Frankie's in trouble  
down town.  
Well if it was any other man, I'd put him straight away.  
But sometimes when it's your brother, you look the  
other way.

Yeah, me and Frankie laughin' and drinkin';  
Nothin' feels better than blood on blood.  
Takin' turns dancin' with Maria,  
While the band played "The Night of the Johnstown  
Flood".  
I catch him when he's strayin', like any brother should.  
Man turns his back on his family, he ain't no good.

Well Frankie went into the army back in 1965,  
I got a farm deferment, settled down, took Maria for  
my wife.  
But them wheat prices kept on droppin', 'til it was like  
we's gettin' robbed.  
Frankie came home in '68, and me, I took this job.

Yeah, me and Frankie laughin' and drinkin';  
Nothin' feels better than blood on blood.  
Takin' turns dancin' with Maria,  
While the band played "The Night of the Johnstown  
Flood".  
I catch him when he's strayin',  
Teach him how to walk that line.  
Man turns his back on his family, ain't no friend of

mine.

The night was like any other, I got a call 'bout a quarter-to-nine.

There was trouble at a roadhouse, out on the Michigan line.

There was a kid on the floor lookin' bad, bleedin' hard from his head.

There was a girl cryin' at a table: "It was Frankie," she said.

I ran out and I jumped in my car and I hit the lights.

I musta done about a hundred and ten, through Michigan county that night.

It was down by the crossroads, out by Willow Bank.

Seen a Buick with Ohio plates; behind the wheel was Frank.

Well I chased him through them county roads.

'Til a sign said "Canadian border five miles from here".

Pulled over to the side of the highway,

Watched the tail-lights disappear.

Yeah, me and Frankie laughin' and drinkin';

Nothin' feels better than blood on blood.

Takin' turns dancin' with Maria,

While the band played "The Night of the Johnstown Flood".

I catch him when he's strayin', like any brother should.

Man turns his back on his family, he ain't no good.

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