

## **Bob Dylan**

# **"North Country Blues"**

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Come gather 'round friends  
And I'll tell you a tale  
Of when the red iron pits ran empty  
But the cardboard filled windows  
And old men on the benches  
Tell you now that the whole town is empty.

In the north end of town  
My own children are grown  
But I was raised on the other  
In the wee hours of youth  
My mother took sick  
And I was brought up by my brother.

The iron ore poured  
As the years passed the door  
The drag lines an' the shovels they was a-humming  
'Til one day my brother  
Failed to come home  
The same as my father before him.

Well a long winter's wait  
From the window I watched  
My friends they couldn't have been kinder  
And my schooling was cut  
As I quit in the spring  
To marry John Thomas, a miner.

Oh the years passed again  
And the givin' was good  
With the lunch bucket filled every season  
What with three babies born  
The work was cut down  
To a half a day's shift with no reason.  
Then the shaft was soon shut

And more work was cut  
And the fire in the air, it felt frozen  
'Til a man come to speak  
And he said in one week  
That number eleven was closin'.

They complained in the East  
They are playing too high  
They say that your ore ain't worth digging  
That it's much cheaper down  
In the South American towns  
Where the miners work almost for nothing.

So the mining gates locked  
And the red iron rotted  
And the room smelted heavy from drinking  
Where the sad silent song  
Made the hour twice as long  
As I waited for the sun to go sinking.

I lived by the window  
As he talked to himself  
This silence of tongues it was building  
Then one morning's wake  
The bed it was bare  
And I's left alone with three children.

The summer is gone  
The ground's turning cold  
The stores one by one they're a-foldin'  
My children will go  
As soon they grow  
Well there ain't nothing here now to hold them.

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