Chris Knight "Down The River"

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i was eightteen my brother was twenty-one one saturday evening when all the work was done we went down to the river, had some trot lines to run

my brother walter
had a fight the week before
knocked a boy named wilson
through the pool hall door
they said you don't mess with wilson
unless you want a war

we put the boat in the water, i made the engine run loaded the lantern against the sinking sun and my brother walter was loading his gun and we went down the river

down past the coal docks
we wre running our lines
heard some drunken boaters
racing up behind
it was wilson and his cousin,
they had trouble on their minds

they passed on by us, probably going to tend their pots we headed up the river with the fish we'd caught but before we made the landing, i thought i heard a shot back down the river

my brother walter fell over the side

i couldn't find him no matter how i tried and looked along the bank but i couldn't find where they'd hide they drug the river, they searched it up and down couldn't find his body so they decided that he'd drowned but i knew better and wilson bragged around town

so one night i floated down right above wilson's shack i hid in the woods till i saw him walk out back i put a bullet in his head and dropped him in his tracks and we went down the river

down below the trestle
where the water runs slow
i chained him to an anvil
and then i let him go
and five years later
i ain't told a soul

and i ain't done much fishing, i hardly wet a line the death of my brother is still heavy on my mind i've been thinking wilson's cousin better find a place to hide cause i'm going down the river yeah i'm going down the river

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