

Rodney Crowell

"Highway 17"

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I put away fifteen grand doing one-night stands mostly
liquor stores and fillin' stations
Me and this peepin' Tom by the name of J.D. Swan and
any number of his odd blood relations
This was armed robbery 1957 and mostly our getaways
were clean
Then I'd pay off the boys and bury my bread out on
Highway 17

I had five kids and a wife with one dress and a yard full
of cars that wouldn't running
My two oldest boys they were on to my noise they
despised what their daddy done
But I did my thing the best I could maing plans by the
light of day
And then night would fall and it was time to call and I
was always on my way

Now J.D. he was crazy and he was inbred he drank
whiskey like it was goin' out of style
You know I should have seen it coming the writing was
on the wall he was getting just a little too loose and wild
Annd he made his mistake out on Airline Drive, you
know those North Houston cops are quick
They blew a hole in J.D. the size of Dallas and put a
lump on my head with the brunt of a nightstick

You know 5-10 in Huntsville ain't no good times boys
but I walked that line do you know what I mean
'Cause my mind was snug on that hole I dug out on
Highway 17
I said my mind was snug on that hole I dug out on
Highway 17

So I served my time only way I knew how thinking big
and making plans
All about the way I was gonna change the world when I
get my hands on that 15 grand
You know C.W. and Herschel my two oldest boys they
took care of their momma and their little sisters the
best way that they could
Dealing dimes and stealing hubcaps you know pretty

soon they were doing good
So I walked out those prison gates a free man on the
first day of November 19 and '63
I kissed my wife and I hugged my babies but they
didn't seem the same to me

You know the boys looked on they were already grown
it was written across their eyes and their faces
I'm the perfect sample of a bad example gone forever
from their graces
But baby six long years and a lot can change many
miles beyond your wildest dreams
But a six-lane wide modern interstate ride out on
Highway 17
Lord they sunk my ship 'neath a concrete strip out on
Highway 17
Man they broke my back they built a concrete track out
on Highway 17
Well, you know it ain't funny but they buried my money
out on Highway 17

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