

Down The River

Chris Knight

i was eighttteen
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