

Uncle Lloyd

Darrell Scott

He was not my father's brother
But he wished that he could be
Told us kids to call him uncle
And we would be his family
He had a wife and kids in Fresno
The youngest one was twenty-four
Dad had brought him into our house
They didn't want him anymore

He helped us work the family business
Building fences in the sun
Worked just like a man of twenty
'Til the working day was done
He and Dad would spend their evening
Sitting in lawn chairs in the yard
Where they'd drink a toast to Seagram's
Seagram's never went down hard

Won't you wake up Uncle Lloyd
Got a lot of work today
We'll get Don to make the coffee
Load that truck and be on your way
Friday night you can drive to Vegas
Maybe this time you will win
Buy a trailer by the river
And you won't have to work again

He was sleeping in the workroom
With a mattress on the floor
When one night I heard him crying
As I passed outside his door
He cried, "Rita, girl I love you
Rita, Darling please don't go
I've tried hard to make you happy
I've done everything I know"

Then I heard the bottle open
The tipping up and putting down
Heard the rustling of the covers
Then he did not make a sound
I thought of thirty years of Rita
Standing sternly by his side
All the years of hanging in there
All the emptiness inside

Then I thought of how their children
Have children of their own
And how a man at fifty-seven
Winds up living so alone