

THOSE SHOES

The demons of transition came at 3 a.m. I found my father in the den watching movies 'til dawn,
His body craving sleep, his mind still in hell as if tied to an anvil down a bottomless well.
Like the sun playing blind man's bluff, my father's roller coaster world would daily threaten decline.
If only there were some way I could help him to sleep.
He'd patiently wave and he'd say, "Those shoes are mine."

Time sped me forward and I chose a career. But some things I couldn't do and keep my conscience clear.
Once upon a time I thought of settling down. But no matter where I turned I found unstable ground.
Old friends from college see the roof caving in. They knuckle under, sink, rebel, or resign.
They call me for solace, rope, or helpful advice.
But what can I tell them? I say, "Those shoes have lied".

Chorus: I'm trapped on a road that's uphill both ways and I ain't allowed to stand still.
Dad worked so hard to lift me over the fray. Now I'm trampled by the battle until
I'm wide awake by three no matter when I went to sleep or whether danger is near.

I slam my briefcase on the kitchen dinette, like a woman or a promise I ain't slept with yet.
Trouble runs the mile in a minute to show me how a man can fail through no fault of his own.
It's taking everything I've got to end in a tie while Mexico and freedom are a chip shot away.
You learn by bleeding just how random's the race, 'cause like it or not, Gary boy, those shoes can cry.

My dad's asleep in the desert tonight. My son's crashed, a stuffed dog by his side.
I envy them both but I dread old age and what I must explain to my boy some day.
Reduced from manhood to a beast that survives, mere names of angels watch over me nights.
I understand now why some men end it all. I found out the hard way those shoes can die.

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