

Coward Of The County by Kenny Rogers

Capo 3rd Fret

[Verse]

A D A  
Ev'ryone considered him the coward of the county.  
He'd never stood one single time to prove the county wrong.  
A D A  
His mama named him Tommy, the folks just called him yellow,  
E A  
but something always told me they were reading Tommy wrong.

A D A  
He was only ten years old when his daddy died in prison.  
E  
I looked after Tommy 'cause he was my brother's son.  
A D A  
I still recall the final words my brother said to Tommy:  
E A  
"Son, my life is over, but yours is just begun.

[Chorus]

A D A  
Promise me, son, not to do the things I've done.  
D A E  
Walk away from trouble if you can.  
A D A  
It won't mean you're weak if you turn the other cheek.  
D E  
I hope you're old enough to understand:  
E7 A  
Son, you don't have to fight to be a man."

(Slide capo to 4th fret)

[Verse]

A D A  
There's someone for ev'ryone and Tommy's love was Becky.  
E  
In her arms he didn't have to prove he was a man.  
A D A  
One day while he was workin' the Gatlin boys came callin'.  
E (Spoken) A  
They took turns at Becky.... There was three of them!

A D A  
Tommy opened up the door and saw his Becky cryin'.

The torn dress, the shattered look was more than he could stand. E

A D A  
He reached above the fireplace and took down his daddy's picture.

E A  
As his tears fell on his daddy's face, he heard these words again:

[Chorus]

A D A  
"Promise me, son, not to do the things I've done.

D A E  
Walk away from trouble if you can.

A D A  
It won't mean you're weak if you turn the other cheek.

D E  
I hope you're old enough to understand:

E7 A  
Son, you don't have to fight to be a man."

(Slide capo to 5th fret)

[Verse]

A D A  
The Gatlin boys just laughed at him when he walked into the barroom.

E  
One of them got up and met him halfway 'cross the floor.

A D A  
When Tommy turned around they said, "Hey look! ol' yellow's leavin'."

(Spoken) E A  
But you coulda heard a pin drop when Tommy stopped and blocked the door.

A D A  
Twenty years of crawlin' was bottled up inside him.

E  
He wasn't holdin' nothin' back; he let 'em have it all.

A D A  
When Tommy left the barroom not a Gatlin boy was standin'.

E A  
He said, "This one's for Becky," as he watched the last one fall.

(Spoken)  
And I heard him say,

[Chorus]

A D A  
"I promised you, Dad, not to do the things you done.

D A E  
I walk away from trouble when I can.

A D A  
Now please don't think I'm weak, I didn't turn the other cheek,

D E  
and Papa, I sure hope you understand:

E7 A  
Sometimes you gotta fight when you're a man."

A D N.C. A  
Ev'ryone considered him the coward of the county.