

Robbie's Got A Gun

Words and Music: Pat Drummond

For Jessica Farmer. Dateline: Gympie, Queensland.

Suicide, is now emerging as a major men's issue. Recent statistics in Australia show that men are now eight times more likely to kill themselves than women are. In 1995, the Gympie Country Music Muster raised some \$80,000 to identify those youths most at risk from suicide in rural areas. I left the Cedar Grove State Forest several days after most of the fans had gone home. Wandering down into Gympie, I picked up, as is my habit, a copy of the local paper. Imagine my shock to find that, just a few miles from the festival site, one Jessica Farmer had been murdered by her son, who had subsequently committed suicide. This song is for the women and children who live in fear of the men they love; and for those men who also live in fear of the widening gulf between their own capacities to provide; and the impossible expectations instilled in them by the society of women that raised them.

Jessie's scared.

You can see it in her eyes if you go out to Robbie's place.

She won't say it to you but that look is on her face.

She's just so damned relieved to see somebody round the place;

Just to know you're there.

Jessie's scared.

She'll do anything at all these days to stay out of a fight.

She won't argue with him even when she knows she's right.

Discretion is the better part so just turn out the light and say your prayers.

Chorus: Like a black snake in the closet, It's peering through the lock

Sometimes he'll go for days and when she thinks that he's forgotten

She'll find him cleaning and staring at the sun.

Telling it that something must be done

and holding it the way she used to hold him.

Robbie's got a gun

Jessie's scared.

Things have gone from bad to worse these last few years.

Any chance they had of holding on has disappeared.

Robbie's not the kind of boy to shed too many tears

but she knows they're there.

She's a country girl who grew up used to guns on farms.

She can quote you verse and chapter of the right to arms

but there's something in his eyes that's setting off alarms and only she can see.

She hears Shooter's Party talking on the ABC;

Says the the right to have our guns is what will make us free.

Robbie laughs and Jessie whispers to her cup of tea,

"I'm not free, I'm not free, Don't try to tell me this is free!"

Jessie's scared.

She can hear it calling to him

from the cupboard near the stairs.

Waiting for a final crazy moment of despair

Promising an end to all the struggle and the care.

Chorus: