

The Oil Trains

Lyrics by Andy Shaw

Sung to the tune of Gordon Lightfoot's *The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald*

The oil trains roll down from the Bakken shale fields
O'er the rivers and streams of the prairie.
The mountains rear up and the engines bear down
As they climb up through rugged rock valleys.

The rails twist and bend under weights gone unborne
since the boom times of early last century.
And rail men can swear that they tend them with care
But the Devil cares not for our safety.

The boardrooms live dreams with gilded age themes
with complete disregard for our families.
And workers might say that their jobs go away
if we don't let the bosses have money.

The big trains roll down with a high wailing sound
as the brakes burn with gravity's fury.
Hundreds of cars come to Roseville's big yard
where they're broken down into the fifties.

And down-rail they go with their Hellish cargo
through towns like Suisun and Green Valley.
Over marshes and fens and the salt water bogs
that were home to the ancient Ohlone.

Then they're crossing our roads with Promethean loads
as they make the wide turn to Valero.
And we all hold our breath as they rattle and roll
when they come to a stop to be emptied.

Could this be the day, as the old ones might say,
when the captains of greed meet their makers?
And the fire sweeps the ground where the prophets went 'round
and professed to be our town's great saviors!