

Pithead Wheels

Music & Lyrics © Simon Todd

In the key of F (capo 5th fret), shapes shown.

C Em F C
Well they built the street I live on for the gold they found beneath it
Em Am F G
For to house the men who risked their lives to bring it over ground
C Em F C
And communities were built upon the passing generations
Em Am F G
Like the father like the son for there was nothing else around
Am Em F C
As the greedy mouth of industry ate all they put before it
Am Em F G
It was hard and it was dangerous but it fed the family
C Em F C
And they sacrificed their health upon the alter of the black dust
Am Em F C
For the town would go on breathing whilst the pithead wheels turned 'round

C Em F C
Well as the years advanced so did the way we'd heat our houses
Em Am F G
Did the way we fuelled the lamps that lit the streets, that lit the town
C Em F C
And they talked of cleaner, safer ways; they talked of economics
Em Am F G
So in preparation of the ire, their stockpile was abound
Am Em F C
And as Margaret looked on with disdain, communities divided
Am Em F G
There was violence; there was terror, accusation and blind fear
C Em F C
So they scrapped and scraped and stood their ground for twelve long months like brothers
Am Em F C
For the town would go on breathing, whilst the pithead wheels turned 'round.

C Em F C
Now some will say it had to be, the unions needed breaking
Em Am F G
But that doesn't help the innocent when work cannot be found
C Em F C
Men who worked the face for thirty years, unskilled in other matters
Em Am F G
Told to train again near fifty years to earn an honest pound
Am Em F C
How it broke my heart to hear a broken man recount the story
Am Em F G
"It was always winner take all; well we lost and they took it all"
C Em F C
So two decades on when Ellington's last shift rose to the surface
Am Em F C
Many towns no longer breathing, no more pithead wheels turned 'round
Am Em F C
All the ruin, all the broken shattered lives that she delivered
Am Em F C
Many towns no longer breathing, no more pithead wheels turned 'round