

Sixteen Tons

written by Merle Travis (1946)

Am Am F E
Some people say a man is made outa mud

Am Am F E
A poor man's made outa muscle 'n blood...

Am Am Dm Dm
Muscle an' blood an' skin an' bone

Am Am E7 E7
A mind that's weak and a back that's strong

Am Am F E
You load sixteen tons an' whaddya get?

Am Am F E
Another day older an' deeper in debt

Am Am Dm Dm
Saint Peter doncha call me 'cause I can't go

Am Am E7 Am Am Am Am
I owe my soul to the company sto'

If ya hear me a-comin' ya better step aside
A lotta men din't an' a lotta men died
With one fist of iron an' the other of steel
If the right one don' getcha then the left one will.

I was born one mornin' when the sun didn't shine
Picked up my shovel and I went to the mine
Loaded sixteen tons of number nine coal
And the strawboss said, "Well, Bless my soul!"

I was born one morning in the drizzlin' rain
Fightin' and trouble are my middle name
I was raised in the canebreak by an' ol' mama hound
Cain't no-a high-toned woman make me walk the line