

Sixteen Tons

(1946)

di Travis Merle

Periodo: La ricostruzione e il boom economico (1946-1966)

Lingua: inglese

Tags: lavoro/capitale, miniera

Indirizzo: <https://www.ildeposito.org/canti/sixteen-tons>

Some people say a man is made out of mud
A poor man's made out of muscle and blood
Muscle and blood, skin and bones...
A mind that's weak and a back that's strong

You load sixteen tons, and what do you get?
another day older and deeper in debt
St. Peter, don't you call me, 'cause I can't
go
I owe my soul to the company store

I was born one mornin' and the sun didn't
shine
I picked up my shovel and I walked to the
mine
I loaded sixteen tons of number nine coal and
the straw boss said, "well bless my soul!"
.....you loaded...

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I was born one mornin' it was drizzlin' rain
fightin' and trouble are my middle name

I was raised in a cane-brake by an old mama
lion
can't no high-toned woman make me walk no
line

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If you see me comin', better step aside
A lot of men didn't, a lot of men died
One fist of iron, the other of steel
If the right one don't get you, then the left
one will

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Informazioni

Canzone che racconta della dura vita del minatore di carbone, che si spezza la schiena dall'alba al tramonto e che nemmeno può concedersi il lusso di morire perché "pieno di debiti, ha venduto l'anima alla compagnia mineraria". Infatti, nonostante le decine di grandi e sanguinosi scioperi organizzati dalla United Mine Workers of America specie nei primi due decenni del 20° secolo, in molte miniere le compagnie non pagavano i lavoratori in denaro corrente ma in assegni o buoni illegali che essi erano costretti a spendere, spesso indebitandosi, negli spacci gestiti dalle stesse compagnie, che così da datrici di lavoro diventavano creditrici e quindi "proprietarie" della forza lavoro alle loro dipendenze. (*Canzoni contro la Guerra*)