Sixteen Tons

A song about a coal miner, based on life in coal mines in Kentucky. It was written and first recorded by Merle Travis in 1946. A 1955 version recorded by Tennessee Ernie Ford reached number one in the Billboard charts.

```
Em                          B7
Some people say a man is made out of mud
Em                          B7
A poor man's made out of muscle and blood
Em                     Am
Muscle and blood and skin and bones
Em                          B7           Em
A mind that's weak and a back that's strong
```

Chorus:

```
                          B7
     You load sixteen tons, what do you get?
Em                     B7
Another day older and deeper in debt
       Em                              Am
Saint Peter don't you call me 'cause I can't go
     Em              B7      Em
I owe my soul to the company store
```

```
                              B7
I was born one morning when the sun didn't shine
   Em                          B7
I picked up my shovel and I walked to the mine
   Em                  Am
I loaded sixteen tons of number nine coal
Em                           B7        Em
And the straw boss said, "Well-a bless my soul!"
```

Chorus

```
                              B7
I was born one morning, it was drizzling rain
Em                        B7
Fightin' and trouble are my middle name
       Em                          Am
I was raised in a cane-break by an ole mama lion
         Em                      B7      Em
Cain't no high-toned woman make me walk the line.
```

Chorus

```
                       B7
If you see me comin' better step aside
   Em                  B7
A lot of men didn't, a lot of men died
     Em                  Am
One fist of iron and the other of steel
       Em                          B7      Em
If the right one don't-a get you then the left one will.
```

Chorus

153