

## 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...

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' 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

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

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

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

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

### 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*)