

## Kentucky Coal Miner's Prayer

Aaron Watson

Deep in the mountain of Harlan County  
Employed by the Cumberland coal company  
The pay is short, the days are long  
But our labor union laws are coming on strong  
So I drink this whiskey for my throat

Wear my hard hat and weathered coat  
Early every morning I stand in line  
Waiting to work these Kentucky coal mines

We enter the shaft around five thirty  
With two dozen hands, cold, callused and dirty  
We'll dig through a million tons of rock and clay  
And we'll still be digging at the end of the day  
Down on our knees we confess our sins  
And pray that the roof above don't cave in

So bless our hearts and save our souls  
And the air we breathe down in the devil's hole  
Just last week when the ceiling fell  
The explosion trapped us in the depths of hell

The weight of the earth took poor Tucker's life  
Leaving behind a hungry baby and wife  
We dug out with our shovels and picks  
But soon enough the black lung disease will make us sick

So bless our hearts and save our souls  
And the air we breathe down in the devil's hole  
I work deep in the mountains of eastern Kentucky

I know if I leave Harlan alive I'll be more than lucky  
Wish I could go to Texas and plant some cottonseed  
But moving takes money and I've got three mouths to feed  
So I drink this whiskey for my throat  
Wear my hard hat and weathered coat  
Early every morning I stand in line  
Waiting to work another Kentucky coal mine