

Patches

Clarence Carter

I was born and raised down in Alabama
On a farm way back up in the woods
I was so raggedy, folks used call me, "Patches"
Papa used to tease me 'bout it
Of course deep down inside he was hurt
'Cause he'd done all he could

My papa was a great ol' man
I can see him with a shovel in his hand
See, education he never had
But he did wonders when the time got bad
The little money from the crops he raised
Barely paid the bills we made

Oh, life it kicked him down to the ground
When he tried to get up, life would kick him back down
One day papa called me to his dyin' bed
Put his hands on my shoulders and in tears he said

He said, "Patches
I'm dependin' on you, son
To pull the family through
My son, it's all left up to you"

Two days later papa passed away
And I became a man that day
So I told mama I was gonna quit school
But she said that was daddy's strictest rule

So every morning 'fore I went to school
I fed the chickens and I chopped wood too

Sometimes I felt that I couldn't go on
I wanted to leave, just run away from home
But I would remember what my daddy said
With tears in his eyes on his dyin' bed

He said, "Patches
I'm dependin' on you, son
I tried to do my best
It's up to you to do the rest"

But then one day a strong rain came
And washed all the crops away
And at the age of 13
I thought I was carryin' the weight of the whole world on my shoulders
And you know mama knew what I was going through

'Cause every day I had to work the fields
'Cause that's the only way we got our meals
You see, I was the oldest of the family
And everybody else depended on me
Every night I heard my mama pray
Lord, give him strength to face another day

4 years have passed and all the kids have grown
The angels took mama to a brand new home

God knows people, I shed tears
But my daddy's voice kept me through the years

Sayin', "Patches
I'm dependin' on you, son
To pull the family through
My son, it's all left up to you"

I can still hear papa when he said, "Patches
I'm dependin' on you, son
I tried to do my best
It's up to you to do the rest"

I can still hear papa when he said, "Patches
I'm dependin' on you, son
To pull the family through