

# Old Man Tell Me

David Allan Coe

I've seen the old man sitting' 'round  
The courthouse square back home in town  
Talkin' about the big war back in 1943  
Saying' how much good it's done  
Medals gleaming' in the sun  
Cussing' at my long hair  
And my talk of being' free

Their vision like their battle scars  
Of other wars has faded  
Like the colors on the ribbons  
From the battles that they've won  
If there's one thing I've learned it's this  
You just can't shake hand with a fist  
And I once did my talkin' with a gun

And, old man, I know what you've seen  
But yours is not the only dream  
I have to believe in something more than yesterday  
Let it die just like the past  
I believe there's hope at last  
Old man, did you ever have to pray  
Old man, can you show me the way

He shakes his head from time to time  
And rambles somewhere in his mind  
Mumbling' 'bout the civil war  
And how we should have won  
Setting' up his battle plans  
On checker boards at his command  
Watching' all his gallant kings go fallen' one by one

And "son," he'd say, "there's not much time  
For you to straighten out your mind  
But you never listen to the things I try to say"  
And I just turn my head and cry  
Never understanding why  
He'd set up that checker board  
When he knew I couldn't play