

You'll Never Leave Harlan Alive

Kathy Mattea

In the deep dark hills of Eastern Kentucky
That's the place where I trace my bloodline
And it's there I read on a hillside gravestone
"You'll never leave Harlan alive"

Oh, my granddads dad crossed the Cumberland Mountains
Where he took a pretty girl to be his bride
Said, "Won't you walk with me out of the mouth of this holler
Or we'll never leave Harlan alive?"

Where the sun comes up about ten in the mornin'
The sun goes down about three in the day
And you'll fill your cup with whatever bitter brew you're drink
in'
And you spend your life just thinkin' of how to get away

No one ever knew there was coal in them mountains
Till a man from the northeast arrived
He was waving hundred dollar bills, said, "I'll pay you for you
r minerals"
But he never left Harlan alive

Grandma sold out cheap and they moved out west of Pikeville
To a farm where big Richland river winds
Oh, I bet they danced them a jig and they laughed and sang a ne
w song
Who said we'd never leave Harlan alive?

But the times got hard and tobacco wasn't selling
And old granddad knew what he'd do to survive
So he went and dug for Harlan coal, sent the money back to gran
ny
But he never left Harlan alive

Where the sun comes up about ten in the mornin'
The sun goes down about three in the day
You fill your cup with whatever bitter brew you're drinkin'
And you spend your life just thinkin' of how to get away

The sun comes up about ten in the mornin'
And the sun goes down about three in the day
And you fill your cup with whatever bitter brew you're drinkin'
And you spend your life diggin' coal from the bottom of your gr
ave