

The Hitter

Tom Jones

Come to the door Ma, and unlock the chain
I was just passin' through and got caught in the rain
There's nothing I want, nothin' that you need say
Just let me lie down for a while and I'll be on my way?

I was no more than a kid when you put me on the Southern Queen
With the police on my back I fled to New Orleans
I fought in the dockyards and with the money I made
I knew the fight was my home and blood was my trade

Baton Rouge, Poncitoula, and Lafayette town
Well they paid me their money Ma I knocked the men down
I did what I did well it come easily
Restraint and mercy Ma were always strangers to me

I fought champion Jack Thompson in a field full of mud
Rain poured through the tent to the canvas and mixed with our blood
In the twelfth I slipped my tongue over my broken jaw
I stood over him and pounded his bloody body into the floor
Well the bell rang and rang and still I kept on
'Till I felt my glove leather slip 'tween his skin and bone

Then the women and the money came fast and the days I lost track
The women red, the money green, but the numbers were black
I fought for the men in their silk suits to lay down their bets
I took my good share Ma, I have no regrets

Then I took the fix at the state armory with big John McDowell
From high in the rafters I watched myself fall
As he raised his arm my stomach twisted and the sky it went black
I stuffed my bag with their good money and I never looked back

Understand, in the end Ma every man plays the game
If you know me one different then speak out his name
Ma if my voice now you don't recognize
Then just open the door and look into your dark eyes
I ask of you nothin', not a kiss not a smile,
Just open the door and let me lie down for a while

Now the gray rain's fallin' and my ring fightin's done
So in the work fields and alleys I take all who'll come
If you're a better man than me then just step to the line
Now there's nothin' I want Ma nothin' that you need say
Just let me lie down for a while and I'll be on my way

Tonight in the shipyard a man draws a circle in the dirt
I move to the center and I take off my shirt
I study him for the cuts, the scars, the pain,
Man, nor the time can erase
I move hard to the left and I strike to the face