

You'll Never Leave Harlan Alive

Brad Paisley

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 will never leave Harlan alive'

When my granddad's dad walked down Catron's Mountain
And he asked Tillie Helton to be his bride
He 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 morning
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 just thinkin' of how to get away

Well no one ever knew there was coal in them mountains
'Til a man from the Northeast arrived
Waving hundred dollar bills
He said, I'll pay you for your minerals
But he never left Harlan alive

Well granny, she sold out cheap and they moved out west of Pineville
To a farm where big Richland River winds
I bet they danced them a jig and laughed and sang a new song
Who said we'd never leave Harlan alive?

But the times, they got hard and tobacco wasn't selling
And ole granddad knew what he'd do to survive
He went and dug for Harlan coal
Sent the money back to granny but he never left Harlan alive

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Where the sun comes up about ten in the morning
And the sun goes down about three in the day
And you fill your cup with whatever bitter brew you're drinking
And you spend your life digging coal from the bottom of your grave

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That's the place where I trace my bloodline
And it's there I read on a hillside gravestone
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