

## Ellis Unit One

Steve Earle

I was fresh out of the service  
It was back in 82  
I raised some Cain when I come back to town  
I left to be all I could be  
Come home without a clue  
Now, I married Dawn and had to settle down

So I hired on at the prison  
Guess I always knew I would  
Just like my dad and both my uncles done  
And I worked on every cell block  
Now, things're goin' good  
But then they transferred me to Ellis Unit One

Swing low  
Swing low  
Swing low and carry me home

Well, my daddy used to talk about them long nights at the walls  
And how they used to strap em in the chair  
The kids down from the college and they'd bring their beer n all  
N when the lights went out, a cheer rose in the air

Well, folks just got too civilized  
Sparky's gatherin' dust  
Cause no one wants to touch a smokin' gun  
And since they got the injection  
They don't mind as much, I guess  
They just put em down at Ellis Unit One

Swing low  
Swing low  
Swing low and carry me home

Well, I've seen em fight like lions, boys  
I've seen 'em go like lambs  
And I've helped to drag em when they could not stand  
And I've heard their mamas cryin' when they heard that big door slam  
And I've seen the victim's family holdin' hands

Last night I dreamed that I woke up with straps across my chest  
And something cold and black pullin' through my lungs  
N even Jesus couldn't save me though I know he did his best  
But he don't live on Ellis Unit One

Swing low  
Swing low  
Swing low and carry me home  
Swing low  
Don't let go  
Swing low and carry me home