

The snow falls on the passes
And it covers up the rails
And the hired men ride up to make them clean
It's a winter camp and a frozen damp
And a shovel in your hand
And a coal train comes rumbling through the seam

That morning came up shining
Clear and sharp as broken glass
We were riding for the tracks at Sugaree
All holler and high spirit
And the devil take the last
And Henry lay a wager then to me

He said "I've got five dollars
And a whiskey at the bar
Says I make the tracks ahead of you"
So we touched our horses up
Sent them running down the hill
And I did something I never meant to do

Well I cut hard behind him
From his blind side I come around
Just as we were going down the scree
I only meant to scare him but he tumbled to the ground
And he broke his neck beneath the doubletree

So you take him cut him out in a length of pine
Lay him out in a suit of clothes
Best that you can find
Lay his body gentle in the ground
And say a prayer for Henry
Before you lay him down

The night before poor Henry died
We slept on open ground
The circus of the stars a blaze of white
Henry was the best friend that I ever had
And I slept still as a child that night