

West Virginia Mine Disaster

Kathy Mattea

Oh say, did you see him, it was early this morning
He passed all your houses on his way to the coal
He was tall, he was slender, and his dark eyes so tender
His occupation was mining, West Virginia his home

It was just before twelve, I was feeding the children
Ben Moseley came running to bring us the news
Number eight is all flooded, many men are in danger
And we don't know their number, but we fear they're all doomed

So I picked up the baby, and I left all the others
To comfort each other and to pray for their own
There's Tommy, fourteen, and there's John not much younger
Their own time soon will be coming to go down the black hole

What will I say to his poor little children?
And what will I tell his dear mother at home?
And what will I say to my heart that's clear broken?
To my heart that's clear broken if my baby is gone?

Now, if I had the money to do more than just feed them
I'd give them good learning, the best could be found
So when they grew up they'd be checkers and weighers
And not spend their life digging in the dark underground

Say, did you see him going, it was early this morning
He passed all your houses on his way to the coal
He was tall, he was slender, and his dark eyes so tender
His occupation was mining, West Virginia his home