

## **Kathy Mattea**

# **"You'll Never Leave Harlan Alive"**

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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'll never leave Harlan alive"

Oh, my granddad's dad crossed the Cumberland  
Mountains  
Where he took a pretty girl to be his bride  
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 mornin'  
The sun goes down about three in the day  
And you'll fill your cup with whatever bitter brew you're  
drinkin'  
And you spend your life just thinkin' of how to get away

No one ever knew there was coal in them mountains  
Till a man from the northeast arrived  
He was waving hundred dollar bills, said, "I'll pay you  
for your minerals"  
But he never left Harlan alive

Grandma sold out cheap and they moved out west of  
Pikeville  
To a farm where big Richland river winds  
Oh, I bet they danced them a jig and they laughed and  
sang a new song  
?Who said we'd never leave Harlan alive?

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

Where the sun comes up about ten in the mornin'  
The sun goes down about three in the day  
You fill your cup with whatever bitter brew you're  
drinkin'  
And you spend your life just thinkin' of how to get away

The sun comes up about ten in the mornin'  
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 diggin' coal from the bottom of  
your grave

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