

David Alan Coe

"If That Ain't Country"

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Recitation:

THE OLD MAN WAS COVERED WITH TATTOOS AND
SCARS
HE GOT SOME IN PRISON AND OTHERS IN BARS
THE REST HE GOT WORKING' ON OLD JUNK CARS
IN THE DAYTIME
THEY LOOKED LIKE TOMBSTONES IN OUR YARD
AND I NEVER SEEN HIM WHEN HE WASN'T TIRED AND
MEAN
HE SOLD USED PARTS TO MAKE ENDS MEET
COVERED WITH GREASE FROM HIS HEAD TO HIS FEET
CUSSING' THE SWEAT AND THE TEXAS HEAT
AND MESQUITES
AND THE NEIGHBORS SAID WE LIVED LIKE HICKS
BUT THEY BRUNG THEIR CARS FOR PA TO FIX ANYHOW
HE WAS VETERAN-PROUD, TRIED AND TRUE
HE'D FOUGHT TILL HIS HEART WAS BLACK AND BLUE
DIDN'T KNOW HOW HE'D MADE IT THROUGH THE HARD
TIMES

HE BOUGHT OUR HOUSE ON THE G.I. BILL
BUT IT WASN'T WORTH ALL HE HAD TO KILL TO GET IT
HE DRANK PEARL IN A CAN AND JACK DANIELS BLACK
CHEWED TOBACCO FROM A MAIL POUCH SACK
HAD AN OLD DOG THAT WAS TRAINED TO ATTACK
SOMETIMES
HE'D GET DRUNK AND MEAN AS A RATTLESNAKE
AND THERE WASN'T TOO MUCH
THAT HE WOULD TAKE FROM A STRANGER

THERE WERE THIRTEEN KIDS AND A BUNCH OF DOGS
A HOUSE FULL OF CHICKENS AND A YARD FULL OF
HOGS
I SPENT THE SUMMERTIME CUTTING' UP LOGS FOR THE
WINTER
TRYING' LIKE THE DEVIL TO FIND THE LORD
WORKING' LIKE A NIGGER FOR MY ROOM AND BOARD
COAL-BURIN' STOVE, NO NATURAL GAS
IF THAT AIN'T COUNTRY, I'LL KISS YOUR ASS

IF THAT AIN'T COUNTRY,

IT'LL HAIR LIP THE POPE
IF THAT AIN'T COUNTRY, IT'S A DAMN GOOD JOKE
I'VE SEEN THE GRAND OLE OPRY,
AND I'VE MET JOHNNY CASH
IF THAT AIN'T COUNTRY, I'LL KISS YOUR ASS

RECITATION:

MAMA SELLS EGGS AT A GROCERY STORE
MY OLDEST SISTER IS A FIRST-RATE WHORE
DAD SAYS SHE CAN'T COME HOME ANYMORE
AND HE MEANS IT
MA JUST SITS AND KEEPS HER SILENCE
SISTER, SHE LEFT 'CAUSE DAD GOT VIOLENT
AND HE KNOWS IT
MAMA SHE'S OLD FAR BEYOND HER TIME
FROM CHOPPING TOBACCO AND I'VE SEEN HER CRYING'
WHEN BLOOD STARTED FLOWING' FROM HER
CALLOUSED HAND AND

IT HURT ME
SHE'D JUST KEEP WORKING' TRYING' TO HELP THE OLD
MAN
TO THE END OF ONE ROW AND BACK AGAIN LIKE
ALWAYS
SHE'S BEEN THROUGH HELL SINCE JUNIOR WENT TO
JAIL
WHEN THE LIGHTS GO OUT SHE AIN'T NEVER FAILED
TO GET DOWN ON HER KNEES AND PRAY
BECAUSE SHE LOVES HIM
TOLD ALL THE NEIGHBORS HE WAS OFF IN THE WAR
FIGHTING' FOR FREEDOM,
HE'S GOOD TO THE CORE AND SHE'S PROUD
NOW OUR PLACE WAS A GRAVEYARD FOR
AUTOMOBILES
AT THE END OF THE PORCH THERE WAS FOUR STACKS
OF WHEELS
AND TIRES FOR SALE FOR A DOLLAR OR TWO
CASH

THERE WAS FIFTY HOLES IN AN OLD TIN ROOF
ME AND MY FAMILY WE WAS LIVING' PROOF
THE PEOPLE WHO FORGOT ABOUT POOR WHITE TRASH
AND IF THAT AIN'T COUNTRY, I'LL KISS YOUR ASS
IF THAT AIN'T COUNTRY, IT'LL HAIR LIP THE POPE
IF THAT AIN'T COUNTRY, IT'S A DAMN GOOD JOKE
I'VE SEEN THE GRAND OLE OPRY,
AND I'VE MET JOHNNY CASH
IF THAT AIN'T COUNTRY, I'LL KISS YOUR ASS
I'M THINKING TONIGHT OF MY BLUE EYES
CONCERNING THE GREAT SPECKLED BIRD
I DIDN'T KNOW GOD MADE HONKY-TONK ANGELS

AND WENT BACK TO THE WILD SIDE OF LIFE

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