

**A BOY NAMED SUE**

Written by Shel Silverstein; performed by Johnny Cash

**G** **C**  
MY DADDY LEFT HOME WHEN I WAS THREE AND HE DIDN'T LEAVE MUCH TO MA AND ME  
**D** **G**  
JUST THIS OLD GUITAR AND AN EMPTY BOTTLE OF BOOZE.  
**G**  
NOW, I DON'T BLAME HIM CAUSE HE RUN AND HID  
**C**  
BUT THE MEANEST THING THAT HE EVER DID  
**D** **G**  
WAS BEFORE HE LEFT, HE WENT AND NAMED ME 'SUE.'

WELL, HE MUST O' THOUGHT THAT IS WAS QUITE A JOKE  
AND IT GOT A LOT OF LAUGHS FROM A' LOTS OF FOLK,  
IT SEEMS I HAD TO FIGHT MY WHOLE LIFE THROUGH.  
SOME GAL WOULD GIGGLE AND I'D GET RED  
AND SOME GUY'D LAUGH AND I'D BUST HIS HEAD,  
I TELL YA, LIFE AIN'T EASY FOR A BOY NAMED 'SUE.'

WELL, I GREW UP QUICK AND I GREW UP MEAN,  
MY FIST GOT HARD AND MY WITS GOT KEEN,  
I'D ROAM FROM TOWN TO TOWN TO HIDE MY SHAME.  
BUT I MADE ME A VOW TO THE MOON AND STARS  
THAT I'D SEARCH THE HONKY-TONKS AND BARS  
AND KILL THAT MAN THAT GIVE ME THAT AWFUL NAME.

WELL, IT WAS GATLINBURG IN MID-JULY  
AND I JUST HIT TOWN AND MY THROAT WAS DRY,  
I THOUGHT I'D STOP AND HAVE MYSELF A BREW.  
AT AN OLD SALOON ON A STREET OF MUD,  
THERE AT A TABLE, DEALING STUD,  
SAT THE DIRTY, MANGY DOG THAT NAMED ME 'SUE.'

WELL, I KNEW THAT SNAKE WAS MY OWN SWEET DAD  
FROM A WORN-OUT PICTURE THAT MY MOTHER'D HAD,  
AND I KNEW THAT SCAR ON HIS CHEEK AND HIS EVIL EYE.

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HE WAS BIG AND BENT AND GRAY AND OLD,  
AND I LOOKED AT HIM AND MY BLOOD RAN COLD  
AND I SAID: "MY NAME IS 'SUE!' HOW DO YOU DO! NOW YOU GONNA DIE!"  
  
WELL, I HIT HIM HARD RIGHT BETWEEN THE EYES  
AND HE WENT DOWN BUT, TO MY SURPRISE,  
HE COME UP WITH A KNIFE AND CUT OFF A PIECE OF MY EAR.  
BUT I BUSTED A CHAIR RIGHT ACROSS HIS TEETH  
AND WE CRASHED THROUGH THE WALL AND INTO THE STREET  
KICKING AND A' GOUGING IN THE MUD AND THE BLOOD AND THE BEER.  
  
I TELL YA, I'VE FOUGHT TOUGHER MEN BUT I REALLY CAN'T REMEMBER WHEN,  
HE KICKED LIKE A MULE AND HE BIT LIKE A CROCODILE.  
I HEARD HIM LAUGH AND THEN I HEARD HIM CUSS,  
HE WENT FOR HIS GUN AND I PULLED MINE FIRST,  
HE STOOD THERE LOOKIN' AT ME AND I SAW HIM SMILE.  
  
AND HE SAID: "SON, THIS WORLD IS ROUGH  
AND IF A MAN'S GONNA MAKE IT, HE'S GOTTA BE TOUGH  
AND I KNOW I WOULDN'T BE THERE TO HELP YA ALONG.  
SO I GIVE YA THAT NAME AND I SAID GOOD-BYE  
I KNEW YOU'D HAVE TO GET TOUGH OR DIE  
AND IT'S THAT NAME THAT HELPED TO MAKE YOU STRONG."  
  
HE SAID: 'NOW YOU JUST FOUGHT ONE HELL OF A FIGHT  
AND I KNOW YOU HATE ME, AND YOU GOT THE RIGHT  
TO KILL ME NOW, AND I WOULDN'T BLAME YOU IF YOU DO.  
BUT YA OUGHT TO THANK ME, BEFORE I DIE,  
FOR THE GRAVEL IN YA GUTS AND THE SPIT IN YA EYE  
  
CAUSE I'M THE SON-OF-A-BITCH THAT NAMED YOU 'SUE'.'

I GOT ALL CHOKED UP AND I THREW DOWN MY GUN

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AND I CALLED HIM MY PA, AND HE CALLED ME HIS SON,  
AND I COME AWAY WITH A DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW.  
AND I THINK ABOUT HIM, NOW AND THEN,  
EVERY TIME I TRY AND EVERY TIME I WIN,  
AND IF I EVER HAVE A SON, I THINK I'M GONNA NAME HIM  
BILL OR GEORGE! ANYTHING BUT SUE! I STILL HATE THAT NAME!