

A Boy Named Sue by Johnny Cash

Capo on 1st fret

[Verse 1]

A
My daddy left home when I was three
D
And he didn't leave much to ma and me
E A
Just this old guitar and an empty bottle of booze.
A
Now, I don't blame him cause he run and hid
D
But the meanest thing that he ever did
E A
Was before he left, he went and named me "Sue."

[Verse 2]

A
Well, he must o' thought that is quite a joke
D
And it got a lot of laughs from a' lots of folk,
E A
It seems I had to fight my whole life through.
A
Some gal would giggle and I'd get red
D
And some guy'd laugh and I'd bust his head,
E A
I tell ya, life ain't easy for a boy named "Sue."

[Verse 3]

A
Well, I grew up quick and I grew up mean,
D
My fist got hard and my wits got keen,
E A
I'd roam from town to town to hide my shame.
A
But I made a vow to the moon and stars
D
That I'd search the honky-tonks and bars
E A
And kill that man who gave me that awful name.

[Verse 4]

A
Well, it was Gatlinburg in mid-July
D
And I just hit town and my throat was dry,
E A
I thought I'd stop and have myself a brew.
A
At an old saloon on a street of mud,
D
There at a table, dealing stud,
E A
Sat the dirty, mangy dog that named me "Sue."

[Verse 5]

A
Well, I knew that snake was my own sweet dad
D
From a worn-out picture that my mother'd had,
E A
And I knew that scar on his cheek and his evil eye.
A
He was big and bent and gray and old,
D
And I looked at him and my blood ran cold
E A
And I said: "My name is 'Sue!' How do you do!
Now you gonna die!!"

[Verse 6]

A
Well, I hit him hard right between the eyes
D
And he went down, but to my surprise,
E A
He come up with a knife and cut off a piece of my ear.
A
But I busted a chair right across his teeth
D
And we crashed through the wall and into the street
E A
Kicking and a' gouging in the mud and the blood and the beer.

[Verse 7]

A

I tell ya, I've fought tougher men
D
But I really can't remember when,
E A
He kicked like a mule and he bit like a crocodile.
A
I heard him laugh and then I heard him cuss,
D
He went for his gun and I pulled mine first,
E A
He stood there lookin' at me and I saw him smile.

[Verse 8]

A
And he said: "Son, this world is rough
D
And if a man's gonna make it, he's gotta be tough
E A
And I knew I wouldn't be there to help ya along.
A
So I give ya that name and I said goodbye
D
I knew you'd have to get tough or die
E A
And it's the name that helped to make you strong."

[Verse 9]

A
He said: "Now you just fought one hell of a fight
D
And I know you hate me, and you got the right
E A
To kill me now, and I wouldn't blame you if you do.
A
But ya ought to thank me, before I die,
D
For the gravel in ya guts and the spit in ya eye
E A
Cause I'm the son-of-a-bitch that named you "Sue.'"

[Verse 10]

A
I got all choked up and I threw down my gun
D
And I called him my pa, and he called me his son,
E A

And I came away with a different point of view.

A

And I think about him, now and then,

D

Every time I try and every time I win,

[No Chords]

And if I ever have a son, I think I'm gonna name him

A (keep strumming)

Bill or George! Anything but Sue! I still hate that name!