

Tom Ames' Prayer

Steve Earle

Everyone in Nacadoches knew Tom Ame's would come to some bad end
Well the sheriff had caught him stealin' chickens and such
By the time that he was ten And one day his daddy took a ten dollar bill
And he tucked it in his hand
He said I can tell you're headed for trouble son
And your momma wouldn't understand So he took that money and his brothers old bay
And he left without a word of thanks
Fell in with a crowd in some border town
And took to robbing banks Well outside the law your luck will run out fast
And a few years came and went
'Till he's trapped in an alley in Abilene
With all but four shells spent And he realized praying was the only thing
That he hadn't ever tried
Well he wasn't sure he knew quite how
But he looked up to the sky Said you don't owe me nothing and as far as I know
Lord don't owe nothing to you
And I ain't asking for a miracle Lord
Just a little bit of luck will do And you know I ain't never prayed before
But it always seemed to me
If praying is the same as begging Lord
I don't take no charity Yeah but right now Lord with my back to the wall
Can't help but recall
How they nearly hung me for stealing a horse
In Fort Smith Arkansas Judge Parker said guilty and the gavel came down
Just like a cannon shot
And I went away quietly
And I began to file and plot Well they sent the preacher down to my cell
He said the Lord is your only hope
He's the only friend that you gonna have
When you hit the end of Parker's rope Well I guess he could of kept on preaching till Christmas
But he turned his back on me
I put a home made blade to that golden throat
And asked the deputy for the key Well it ain't the first close call I ever had
As I'm sure you already know
I had some help from you Lord and the devil himself
It's been strictly touch and go
Yeah but who in the hell am I talking to
There ain't no one here but me
And then he cocked both his pistols and he spit in the dirt

And he walked out in the street

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