Patches

Clarence Carter

I was born and raised down in Alabama
On a farm way back up in the woods
I was so ragged that folks used to call me PatchesPapa used to tease me about it
'Cause deep down inside he was hurt
'Cause he'd done all he couldMy papa was a great old man
I can see him with a shovel in his hands, see
Education he never hadHe did wonders when the times got bad
The little money from the crops he raised
Barely paid the bills we madeFor, life had kick him down to the ground
When he tried to get up
Life would kick him back downOne day papa called me to his dyin' bed
Put his hands on my shoulders
And in his tears he saidHe said, "Patches
I'm dependin' on you, son
To pull the family through
My son, it's all left up to you"Two days later papa passed away
And I became a man that day
So I told mama I was gonna quit school
But she said that was daddy's strictest ruleSo every mornin' 'fore I went to school
I fed the chickens and I chopped wood too
Sometimes I felt that I couldn't go onI wanted to leave, just run away from home
But I would remember what my daddy said
With tears in his eyes on his dyin' bedHe said, "Patches
I'm dependin' on you, son
I tried to do my best
It's up to you to do the rest"Then one day a strong rain came and washed all the crops away
And at the age of thirteen I thought I was carryin'
The weight of the whole world on my shoulders
And you know, Mama knew what I was goin' through, 'causeEvery day I had to work the fields
'Cause that's the only way we got our meals
See, I was the oldest of the family
And everybody else depended on meEvery night I heard my mama pray
Lord, give him the strength
To make another daySo years have passed and all the kids are grown
The angels took mama to a brand new home
Lord knows, people, I shedded tears
But my daddy's voice kept me through the yearsSing, "Patches
I'm dependin' on you, son
To pull the family through

My son, it's all left up to you"Oh, I can still hear papa's voice sayin', "Patches
I'm dependin' on you, son
I've tried to do my best
It's up to you to do the rest"

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