

# More About John Henry

## Tom T. Hall

{The Storytellers and I were doin' a show down in Meridian, Mississippi

And these friends of mine came up

And brought me this real old book about John Henry

And they told me if they let me read this old book

I'd probably write a song about it

And they did and I did and I called it 'More about John Henry'}First of all John Henry was a black man

He was born where the sun don't ever shine

He was six feet tall he didn't know his own strength

But he did not swing the hammer all the time

Of course he didn't, John Henry had some women on his mindThere was a woman cross the street named Poor  
Selma

Loved John Henry like a natural man

John Henry quit Poor Selma just like he was quittin' work

He loved that stinger-ree of Julie Anne

And what is it a stinger-ree is somethin' else you understandThere was a man named Stacker Lee in Argenta  
A little man with a big 44

You know he shot his woman down and took a shot at Poor Selma

But old Stacker won't be shootin' anymore

He had to quit it, John Henry laid him dead on the floorJohn Henry threw Stacker Lee in the river

Then he said, "I've got a say so to say"

He broke out in a song that was wrote by Blind Leonard

He said, "Julie Anne, I'm singing my say"

He said, "I love you but I do not like your lowdown ways"Well John Henry went to a conjurin' woman  
Said, "This misery ain't no way to live"

Somebody's back door creeping on my pretty Julie Anne

Conjure woman had a say so to give

She said, "John Henry", she said, "That's just the way things is"Well John Henry went to a Hell bustin' man  
Said, "I'm tormented deep in my soul"

Well that Hell buster prayed John Henry's sins away

And they tell me that the thunder did roll

Sweet Jesus what a frightenin' sight to beholdFrom that day on John Henry was a changed man

All he did was just work all the time

Well he worked till the muscles in his body gave out

Then he kept right on a workin' in his mind

Don't do it 'cause a man ain't supposed to work all the timeJulie Anne said, "John Henry I love you"  
Poor Selma said, "John Henry you're my man"

Ruby said, "I'm gonna cook ye up some greens and some lean meat

With corn bread in a four foot pan with lotsa cracklins

But John Henry was a different kinda manWell they allow that hard work killed John Henry

I'm gonna leave that allowin' up to you

Well was he killed by hard work or was he killed by bad women

Be sure that this ain't happenin' to you

Quit working when your day's work work is through'Cause a man ain't supposed to work all the time

And you know that ain't just the way the things is

A stinger-ree is somethin' else you understand

Quit working when your your day's work is through

God bless you

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