

Ellis Unit One

Steve Earle

I was fresh out of the service 'n it was back in 82
I raised some Cain, when I come back to town
I left to be all I could be, come home without a clue
Now, I married Dawn and had to settle down
So I hired on at the prison
Guess, I always knew I would
Just like my dad and both my uncles done
And I worked on every cell block
Now, and things're goin' good
But then they transferred me to Ellis Unit One
Swing low
Swing low
And carry me home
Well, my Daddy used to talk
About them long nights at the walls
And how they used to strap em in the chair
The kids down from the college
And they'd bring their beer 'n all
'N when the lights went out
A cheer rose in the air
Well, folks just got too civilized
Sparky's gatherin' dust
Cause no one wants to touch a smokin' gun
And since they got the injection
They don't mind as much, I guess
They just put em down at Ellis Unit One
Swing low
Swing low
And carry me home
Well, I've seen em fight like lions, boys
I've seen 'em go like lambs
And I've helped to drag em
When they could not stand
And I've heard their mamas cryin'
When they heard that big door slam
And I've seen the victim's family holdin' hands
Last night I dreamed that I woke up
With straps across my chest
And something cold and black, pullin' through my lungs
N even Jesus couldn't save me though
I know He did his best
But He don't live on Ellis Unit One
Swing low
Swing low
And carry me home
Swing low
Don't let go
Swing low
And carry me home

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