Big Bad John

Jimmy Cliff

Big John. Big John.
Every morning at the mine you could see him arrive.
He stood six-foot-six and weighed twofortyfive.
King of broad at the shoulder
at naroow at the hip
and everybody knew you did'nt give no lip to Big John.
Somebody seemed to know where John called home.
He just drifted into town and stayed all alone.
He did'nt say much a kind a quiet and shy
and if you spoke at all
you just said "hi" to Big John.
Big John. Big John. Big John.
Big Bad John.
Nobody said he came from New Orleans
where he got in a fight over a Cajun Queen
and a crashing blow from a huge right hand
sent a Louisiana fellow to the promised land. Big John.
Big John. Big John. Big John.
Big John.
Then came the day at the bottom of the mine
when a timber cracked and the men started craying.
Miners were praying and hearts beat fast
and everybody thought that they'd breathed their last 'cept John.
Through the dust and smoke of this man made hell
walked a giant of a man that the miners knew well.
Grabbed a sagging timber and gave out with a grown

and like a giant oak tree
just stood there alone. Big John.
Big John. Big John. Big John.
Big John.
And with all of his strength
he gave a mighty shove;
then a miner yelled out
there's a light up above!
And twenty men scrambled from a would be grave
and now there's only one left down there to save
Big John.
With jacks and timbers they started back down

then came that rumble way down in the ground
and smoke and gas belched out of that mine
everybody knew
it was the end of the line for for Big John.
Big John. Big John. Big John.
Big Bad John.
Now they never reopened that worthless pit
they just placed a marble stand in front of it;
These few words are written on that stand:
At the bottom of this mine lies a big
big man; Big John.
Big John. Big John.
Big Bad John.
Big John. Big John. ...
Big Bad John ...

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