

## A Boy Named Sue – Shel Silverstein; Johnny Cash

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My **daddy** left home when I was three  
And he **didn't** leave much to ma and me  
Just this **old** guitar and an empty bottle of **booze**  
Now, I don't blame him cause he run and hid  
But the **meanest** thing that he ever did  
Was be-**fore** he left, he went and named me **Sue**  
/ G - / C - / D7 - G - / : (capo 3)  
/ A - / D - / E7 - A - / : (capo 1)

Well, he must o' thought that is quite a joke  
And it got a lot of laughs from a' lots of folk  
It seems I had to fight my whole life through  
Some gal would giggle and I'd get red  
And some guy'd laugh and I'd bust his head  
I tell ya, life ain't easy for a boy named Sue  
Well, I grew up quick and I grew up mean  
My fist got hard and my wits got keen  
I'd roam from town to town to hide my shame  
But I made a vow to the moon and stars  
That I'd search the honky-tonks and bars  
And kill that man who gave me that awful name

Well, it was Gatlinburg in mid-July  
And I just hit town and my throat was dry  
I thought I'd stop and have myself a brew  
At an old saloon on a street of mud  
There at a table, dealing stud  
Sat the dirty, mangy dog that named me Sue

Well, I knew that snake was my own sweet dad  
From a worn-out picture that my mother'd had  
And I knew that scar on his cheek and his evil eye  
He was big and bent and gray and old  
And I looked at him and my blood ran cold  
And I said, "My name is Sue, how do you do  
Now you're gonna die"

Well, I hit him hard right between the eyes  
And he went down, but to my surprise  
He come up with a knife and cut off a piece of my ear  
But I busted a chair right across his teeth  
And we crashed through the wall and into the street  
Kicking and a' gouging in the mud and the blood and  
the beer

I tell ya, I've fought tougher men  
But I really can't remember when  
He kicked like a mule and he bit like a crocodile  
I heard him laugh and then I heard him cuss  
He went for his gun and I pulled mine first  
He stood there lookin' at me and I saw him smile

And he said, "Son, this world is rough  
And if a man's gonna make it, he's gotta be tough  
And I knew I wouldn't be there to help ya along  
So I give ya that name and I said goodbye  
I knew you'd have to get tough or die  
And it's the name that helped to make you strong"

He said, "Now you just fought one hell of a fight  
And I know you hate me, and you got the right  
To kill me now, and I wouldn't blame you if you do  
But ya ought to thank me, before I die  
For the gravel in ya guts and the spit in ya eye  
'Cause I'm the son-of-a-bitch that named you Sue"

I got all choked up and I threw down my gun  
And I called him my paw, and he called me his son  
And I came away with a different point of view  
And I think about him, now and then  
Every time I try and every time I win  
And if I ever have a son, I think I'm gonna name him...  
Bill or George! Anything but Sue!