

Mark Knopfler, Song For Sonny Liston

So many mouths
To feed on the farm
Sonny was the second
To the last one born
His mamma ran away
And his daddy beat him bad
And he grew up wild
Good love he never had

He had a left
Like henry's hammer
A right like betty bamalam
Rode with the muggers
In the dark and dread
And all them sluggers
Went down like lead

Well he hung with the hoods
He wouldn't stroke the fans
But he had dynamite
In both his hands
Boom bam
Like the slammer door
The bell and the can
And the bodies on the floor

Beware the bear's in town
Somebody's money says
The bear's going down
Yeah, the bear never smiles
Sonny's going down
For miles and miles
Sonny's going down
For miles and miles

The writers didn't like him
The fight game jocks
With his lowlife backers
And his hands like rocks
They didn't want to have
A bogey man
They didn't like him
And he didn't like them

Black cadillac
Alligator boots
Money in the pockets
Of his sharkskin suits
Some say the bear
Took a flop
They couldn't believe it
When they saw him drop

He had a left
Like henry's hammer
A right like betty bamalam
Rode with the muggers
In the dark and dread
And all them sluggers
Went down like lead

Joe Louis was his hero
He tried to be the same
But a criminal child

Wears a ball and chain
So the civil rights people
Didn't want him on the throne
And the hacks and the cops
Wouldn't leave him alone

Beware the bear's in town
Somebody's money says
The bear's going down
Yeah, the bear never smiles
Sonny's going down
For miles and miles
Sonny's going down
For miles and miles

At the foot of his bed
With his feet on the floor
There was dope in his veins
And a pistol on the drawer
There was no investigation
As such
He hated needles
But he knew too much

Criss-crossed
On his back
Scars from his daddy
Like slavery tracks
The second-last child
Was the second-last king
Never again was it the same
In the ring

He had a left
Like Henry's hammer
A right like Betty Bamalam
Rode with the muggers
In the dark and dread
And all them sluggers
Went down like lead

They never could be sure
About the day he was born
A motherless child
Set to working on the farm
And they never could be sure
About the day he died
The bear was the king
They cast aside

Beware the bear's in town
Somebody's money says
The bear's going down
Yeah, the bear never smiles
Sonny's going down
For miles and miles
Sonny's going down
For miles and miles

"Some day they're gonna write a
Blues for fighters. It'll just be for
Slow guitar, soft trumpet and a bell."

Sonny Liston, 1962

