Mama Tried
Written by Merle Haggard

1. The first thing I remember knowing,
   Was a lonesome whistle blowing,
   And a young-un's dream of growing up to ride,
   On a freight train leaving town,
   Not knowing where I'm bound,
   No-one could change my mind but Mama tried.

2. One and only rebel child,
   From a family meek and mild,
   My Mama seemed to know what lay in store,
   Despite my Sunday learning,
   Towards the bad, I kept on turning,
   'Til Mama couldn't hold me anymore.

chorus: And I turned twenty-one in prison doing life without parole,
   No-one could steer me right but Mama tried, Mama tried,
   Mama tried to raise me better, but her pleading I denied,
   That leaves only me to blame 'cause Mama tried.

3. Dear old Daddy, rest his soul,
   Left my Mom a heavy load,
   She tried so very hard to fill his shoes,
   Working hours without rest,
   Wanting me to have the best,
   She tried to raise me right but I refused.

chorus: