**Mama Tried**

Merle Haggard 1968

**INTRO: / 1 2 / 1 2 / [G] / [G]**

The first thing **[G]** I remember **[C]** knowin’

Was a **[G]** lonesome whistle **[C]** blowin’

And a **[G]** young-un’s dream of **[C]** growin’ up to **[D7]** ride **[D7]**

On a **[G]** freight train leavin’ **[C]** town

Not **[G]** knowin’ where I’m **[C]** bound

And no **[G]** one could change my **[D7]** mind

But Mama **[G]** tried **[G]**

One and **[G]** only rebel **[C]** child

From a **[G]** family meek and **[C]** mild

My **[G]** Mama seemed to **[C]** know what lay in **[D7]** store **[D7]**

In spite of **[G]** all my Sunday **[C]** learnin’

Toward the **[G]** bad I kept on **[C]** turnin’

‘Til **[G]** Mama couldn’t **[D7]** hold me any-**[G]**more **[G]**

**CHORUS:**

And I turned **[G]** twenty-one in prison

Doin’ **[C]** life without par-**[G]**ole

No **[Em]** one could steer me right

But Mama **[D]** tried, Mama **[D7]** tried

Mama **[G]** tried to raise me better

But her **[C]** pleading I de-**[G]**nied

That leaves **[G]** only me to **[D7]** blame, ‘cause Mama **[G]** tried **[G]**

**[G]/[G]/[C]/[C]/**

**[G]/[D7]/[G]/[G]**

Dear old **[G]** Daddy rest his **[C]** soul

Left my **[G]** mom a heavy **[C]** load

She **[G]** tried so very **[C]** hard to fill his **[D7]** shoes **[D7]**

Workin’ **[G]** hours without **[C]** rest

Wanted **[G]** me to have the **[C]** best

She **[G]** tried to raise me **[D7]** right, but I re-**[G]**fused **[G]**

**CHORUS:**

And I turned **[G]** twenty-one in prison

Doin’ **[C]** life without par-**[G]**ole

No **[Em]** one could steer me right

But Mama **[D]** tried, Mama **[D7]** tried

Mama **[G]** tried to raise me better

But her **[C]** pleading I de-**[G]**nied

That leaves **[G]** only me to **[D7]** blame, ‘cause Mama **[G]** tried **[G]↓**

****

[www.bytownukulele.ca](http://www.bytownukulele.ca)