

## **Stan Ridgway**

# **"Call of The West"**

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He got the high sign so he jumped a bus  
Along the roads that wind on through  
The hot mojave and the jericho  
He'd start his whole life anew  
And what he left behind he hadn't valued  
Half as much as some things  
He never knew

Right around sundown...  
He got dropped off on a street in town  
Where a grey old man looked him up and down and  
said  
"son, this ain't no western movie matinee  
You're a long way off from yippie-yi-yay  
'cause I can tell at a glance you're not from 'round  
these parts  
You've got a green look about'cha, that's a  
gringo for starts  
Sometimes the only thing a western savage  
understands  
Are whiskey and rifles and an unarmed man  
Like you"  
"so you gotta keep on the move!  
Don't let that fancy paint job fool you!"  
Then the old timer pulled him close and said  
You've got a long way, I know  
You've got a longer drive ahead  
Through the bones of the buffalo  
Through the claims of the western dead,  
and  
Just like the spokes of a wheel  
You'll spin 'round with the rest  
You'll hear the drums and the brush of steel  
You'll hear the call of the west, call of the west  
You'll hear the call of the west, call of the west  
Spoken  
Harshly awakened by the sound of six rounds of light-  
caliber rifle fire  
Followed minutes later by the booming of nine rounds  
from a heavier rifle  
But you can't close off the wilderness  
He heard the snick of a rifle bolt

And found himself peering down the muzzle  
Of a weapon held by a drunken liquor store owner  
"there's a conflict," he said, "there's a conflict  
Between land and people  
The people have to go  
They've come all the way out here to make mining  
claims  
To do automobile body work  
To gamble  
Take pictures  
To not have to do laundry  
To own a mini-bike  
Have their own cb radios and air conditioning  
Good plumbing for sure  
And to sell time/life books and to work in a deli  
To have a little chili every morning  
And maybe... maybe to own their own gas stations  
again  
And take drugs  
Have some crazy sex  
But above all, above all, to have a fair shake  
To get a piece of the rock and a slice of the pie  
And spit out of the window of your car and not have the  
wind blow it back in your face"  
Now, from the high timberline to the deserts dry  
Who'll risk dangling on some hangman's tree  
To stake their claims on these prairie plains  
While they say this lunch is not had for free?  
Just like the spokes of a wheel  
Who'll spin 'round with the rest  
They'll hear the drums and the brush of steel  
And I'll hear the call of the west, call of the west  
(yippee-yi-yo, yippee-yi-yo-ki-yay, yippee-yi-yo-ohh-ohh)  
I'll hear the call of the west, call of the west  
(yippee-yi-yo, yippee-yi-yo-ki-yay, yippee-yi-yo-ohh-ohh)  
I'll hear the call of the west, call of the west  
(yippee-yi-yo, yippee-yi-yo-ki-yay, yippee-yi-yo-ohh-ohh)  
I'll hear the call of the west, call of the west  
(yippee-yi-yo, yippee-yi-yo-ki-yay, yippee-yi-yo-ohh-ohh)  
Spoken/shouted:  
I used to be somebody!  
I used to be somebody, do you hear me?  
Do you hear me? I've been there!  
I used to be somebody, God damn you!  
I've been there before!  
Don't walk away!  
Well, youÃÂcÃÂcyou wanted unleaded?  
UnleadedÃÂcÃÂcthat's next pump over, so keep on  
movin', okay?  
No, it's out of order.

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