

# The Last Ride

Hank Snow

In the Dodge City Yards of the Santa Fe  
Stood a freight made up for the east  
And the engineer with his oil and waste  
Was groomin' the great iron beast  
While ten cars back in the murky dust  
A boxcar door swung wide  
And a hobo lifted his pal aboard  
To start on his last long ride

A lantern swung and the freight pulled out  
The engine, it gathered speed  
The engineer pulled the throttle wide  
And clucked to his fiery steed

Ten cars back in the empty box  
The hobo rolled uphill  
The flare of the match showed his partner's face  
Stark white and deathly still  
As the train wheels clicked on the couplin' joints  
A song for the rambler's ear  
The hobo talked to the still white form  
His pal for many a year

For a mighty long time, we've rambled, Jack  
With the luck of men that roam  
With the backdoor steps for a dining room  
And a boxcar for a home  
We dodged the bulls on the Eastern route  
And the cops on the Chesapeake  
We travelled the Leadville narrow gauge  
In the days of Cripple Creek  
We drifted down thru sunny Cal  
On the rails of that old S. P.  
And of all you had, thru good and bad  
A half always belonged to me  
You made me promise to you Jack  
If I lived, and you cashed in  
To take you back to the old church yard  
And bury you there with your kin  
You seemed to know I would keep my word  
'Cause you said that I was right  
Well, I'm keepin' my promise to you, pal  
'Cause I'm takin' you home tonight  
I haven't the money to send you there  
So, I'm takin' you back on the fly  
It's the decent way for a 'bo to go  
Home to the by and by  
I knew that that fever had you, Jack  
And that doctor, he just wouldn't come  
He was too busy treatin' the wealthy folks  
To doctor a worn-out bum

As the train rolled over its ribbons of steel  
Straight thru to the East it sped  
The engineer in his high cab seat  
Kept his eye on the rails ahead  
While ten cars back in the empty box

A lonely hobo sighed  
For the days of old and his pal, so cold  
Who was takin' his last long ride