

The Idiot

Stan Rogers

I often take these night shift walks
When the foreman's not around
I turn my back on the cooling stacks
And make for open ground
Far out beyond the tank-farm fence
Where the gas flare makes no sound
I forget the stink and I always think
Back to that Eastern town

I remember back six years ago
This western life I chose
And every day the news would say
Some factory's going to close
Well, I could have stayed to take the dole
But I'm not one of those.
I take nothing free, and that makes me,
An idiot, I suppose.

So I bid farewell to the Eastern town
I never more will see
But work I must so I eat this dust
And breathe refinery
Oh I miss the green and the woods and streams
And I don't like cowboy clothes
But I like being free and that makes me
An idiot, I suppose.

So come all you fine young fellows
Who've been beaten to the ground
This western life's no paradise,
But it's better than lying down.
Oh the streets aren't clean, and there's nothing green,
And the hills are dirty brown,
But the government dole will rot your soul
Back there in your home town.

So bid farewell to the Eastern town
You never more will see.
There's self-respect and a steady check
In this refinery.
You will miss the green and the woods and streams
And the dust will fill your nose.
But you'll be free, and just like me,
An idiot, I suppose.