

The song tells a folk tale of a cowboy who has a vision of red-eyed, steel-hooved cattle thundering across the sky, being chased by the spirits of damned cowboys. One warns him that if he does not change his ways, he will be doomed to join them, forever "trying to catch the Devil's herd across these endless skies". The story resembles the northern European mythic Wild Hunt.



An went riding out one dark and windy day
 Upon a ridge he rested as he went along
 When all a mighty herd of red eyed cows he saw
 A-plowing through the ragged and up the cloudy draw.
 Their brands were still on fire and their hooves were
 Their horns were black and shiny and their hot breath he
 A bolt of fear went through him as they thundered the sky
 For he saw the riders coming hard and he heard their mournful

Yippie yi Ohhhhh
 Yippie yi yaaaaay
 Ghost Riders in the sky

..... gaunt, their eyes were blurred, their shirts all soaked with sweat
 to catch that herd, but he ain't caught 'em yet
 'Cause they've got to ride on that range up in the sky
 On horses snorting fire
 As they ride on hear their cry

As the riders passed on by him he heard
 to save your soul from Hell a-riding on our range
 Then cowboy your ways today or with us you will ride
 Trying to catch the Devil's herd, across these

- tale:** story
- steel:** first class iron
- hoove:** a cow's foot
- cattle:** cows
- chase:** hunt
- spirit:** ghost
- doom:** bad destiny
- resemble:** look similar

- ridge:** raised aera
- mighty:** big
- plowing:** cut through (earth)
- ragged:** into pieces
- draw:** move
- brand:** mark burned on animal
- bolt:** lightning flash
- mournful:** feeling sad
- gaunt:** thin
- blur:** unclear
- soaked:** wet
- ain't:** hasn't
- range:** open land
- snort:** force air through nose
- soul:** spirit

Make the sentences negative:

It was a windy night. ...*It wasn't a windy night.*

He rested upon a ridge.

Can you see that mighty herd?

He could feel their hot breath.

They have got to ride forever.

We could hear him cry.

Change your way.

The skies were endless.