

The ballad of “When Justice Was Swift”

It's too late for this rider, who's fleeing for life.
Long days on the trail, the West and its strife.
He's blown it for sure, there's no going back.
Behind him the man, lay dead in his track.
But nearer, yes nearer, the posse closes in.
He can hear distant yells, and the shouting of men.
He now flees for life, not a moment to spare.
When he gets strung up, surely none will care.

Roy Rogers, Gene Autry and others of fame,
Remind us of good, the bad guys to blame.
With hat and with horse, the frontier to test,
Riding with courage, sharp image of the West.
Virtue crossing evil and proving so strong.
We joy seeing justice, triumphant over wrong.
It all looks so simple, but we fail to see,
We too are guilty, like the Hoot Owls who flee.

This rider from justice, who failed his chance,
Heard preachers warning of God's angry glance.
They warned him of justice, and a time to repent.
Told of God's mercy, the answer He sent.
They then pictured hell, with it's fires so hot,
Told of heaven, the home Christ's blood has bought.
All of these words, he so sadly forsook.
Reasoned, "There's time, I've no need of that Book."

As this Hoot Owl goes on, he sees his fate clear.
The thunder of hooves, ever drawing near.
He glimpses past his shoulder, sees mad cowboys ride.
Their dust raising ominously, like a storm to split wide.
He ponders his escape, and finds a comforting thought.
Remembering his good deeds, thinking they'll cover his blot.
Soon the posse has him, the leader finding a tree.
Another carries the rope, while others grin with glee.

This outlaw tells his defence, hoping all ends well.
He tells of deeds past, quite a list to spell.
Supported the Relief Fund, helped cowboys lost at night.
To others safe travel, avoiding Indian fight.
He'd honored his parents, the son of their joy.
Not cussing nor stealing, he'd been their good boy.
His list went on to all in his sight.
Coming to a close, he expected respite.

Shock of all shocks when this Hoot Owl heard say,
"Matters not of good works, for your crime you'll pay!
Think not to ask mercy, you chose not the right.
Your temper lost but once, put all good deeds to flight.
The law still condemns you, and shows one great blot.
Soon you'll be hanging for buzzards to spot."
As this "outlaw" swings, we all should beware.
We too must meet Justice, and how will we fare?

The Law must condemn us, good deeds matter not.
God's righteousness upheld by judging that blot.
God is a Judge not like us, He's past being bought.
His justice is righteous; not defiled in favors sought.
God's justice is rendered, not wavering for a few.
He's always consistent, faithful to all that's true.
His character is proven, consistent at every turn.
His righteousness never failing, all iniquity to spurn.

God's righteous justice, will swiftly arise.
His horse at full gallop, a blaze in His eyes.
The angels His posse, fulfilling His will.
Their riding in fury, close in on the kill.
There'll be one great difference, the suffering won't end.
May you take warning, God's Son for your mend.
God's Justice has mercy, through grace in His Son.
Righteousness upheld, the blood price this won.

This may be the last chance you have to make right.
The time to change course, from that Hoot Owl's plight.
Repent before God, before He judges your case.
In humility, turn and partake of His grace.
Not trusting your worth, as above all reproach.
Heeding your conscience, God's gift for our coach.
To pass this off now assures loss Judgment Day.
By some brook in the prairie, swinging, you'll pay.