

Ella Speed - Mance Lipscomb (1960)

Well the first time I shot Ella  
I shot her through the side  
The second time I could not tell where  
But the third time I shot her  
I shot her through the head  
You know that shot musta killed poor Ella dead

When they'd all gotten news  
That Ella Speed was dead  
He goes home and dresses up in red  
[There was two white horses](#)  
[Side in side](#)  
[Gonna take Ella for a last farewell ride](#)

Ella 'fore she died  
Last word she said  
Tell my sisters please don't do like me  
That's fall in love with everyone ??  
With everyone that she sees

One of these mornings  
While you're having fun  
Somebody 'gon do like Ella done  
That Ella she went out  
Just to have some fun  
She got shot out on with a colt 41

Well they shot Ella once  
Didn't shoot her no more  
She staggered across the ballroom floor  
Ain't it hard  
Man but it's ??  
To get loved someone don't love you

Well the last word  
I heard Ella say  
Tell my sisters don't do like me  
That is fall in love with everyone  
With everyone that ya see

See That My Grave is Kept Clean - Blind Lemon  
Jefferson (1928)

Well, it's one kind favor I ask of you  
Well, it's one kind favor I ask of you  
Lord, it's one kind favor I'll ask of you  
See that my grave is kept clean

It's a long lane, ain't got no end  
It's a long lane that's got no end  
It's a long lane ain't got no end  
And it's a bad wind that never change

[Lord, it's two white horses in a line](#)  
[Well, it's two white horses in a line](#)  
[Well, it's two white horses in a line](#)  
[Gonna take me to my buryin' ground](#)

My heart stopped beatin' and my hands got cold  
My heart stopped beatin' and my hands got cold  
Well, my heart stopped beatin', Lord, my hands got  
cold  
It wasn't long 'fore they took me to the cypress grove

[Have you ever heard a coffin sound?](#)  
[Have you ever heard a coffin sound?](#)  
[Have you ever heard a coffin sound?](#)  
Then you know that the poor boy is in the ground

Oh, dig my grave with a silver spade  
Well, dig my grave with a silver spade  
Well, dig my grave with a silver spade  
You may lead me down with a golden chain

Have you ever heard a church bell's tone?  
Have you ever heard a church bell's tone?  
Have you ever heard a church bell tone?  
Then you know that the poor boy's dead and gone

Acoustic Blues - Beck (2001)

Oooh oooh

There's something ahead on up the road  
There's something ahead on up the road  
There's something ahead on up the road, oh Lord  
[Take me to my burying ground](#)

Her soul looks lonesome now to me  
Her soul looks lonesome now to me  
Her soul looks lonesome now to me, oh Lord  
The sun is going down, oooh

Yeah!

[There's two white horses in a line](#)  
[Two white horses in a line](#)  
[Two white horses in a line](#)  
[Gonna take me for a last farewell ride](#)

*Farewell Ride, Album Version - Beck (2005)*

Ahhh ahhh ahhh

Two white horses in a line  
Two white horses in a line  
Two white horses in a line  
Carrying me to my burying ground

Some need diamonds, some need love \*  
Some need cards, some need luck  
Some need dollar bills lining their clothes \*\*  
All I need is  
All I need is

Two white horses in a line  
Two white horses in a line  
Two white horses in a line  
Taking me for my farewell ride

Some may say this might be your last farewell ride  
Some may say this might be your last farewell ride

I don't see the face of kindness  
And I don't hear the mission bells  
I don't smell the morning roses \*\*\*  
All I see is  
All I see is

Two white horses in a line  
Two white horses in a line  
Two white horses in a line  
Carrying me to my burying ground

Some may say this might be your last farewell ride  
Some may say this might be your last farewell ride

*Farewell Ride, Subtle Remix - Beck (2005)*

Two white horses in a line  
Two white horses in a line  
Two white horses in a line  
Two white horses in a  
Carry me to my burying ground

Some need diamonds, some need fireworks \*  
Some need cards, some need luck  
Some need shattered glass lining their clothes \*\*  
All I need is  
All I need is

Have you ever heard a coffin sound?

Hit the ground  
Happen up a ??  
In your neck ??  
???  
If you can feel it stinging  
Down the hollow  
??  
Sat soft on the hardwood ??  
??

Some may say this might be your last farewell ride  
Some may say this might be your last farewell ride

Have you ever heard a coffin sound?  
Have you ever heard a coffin sound?  
Have you ever heard a coffin sound?  
Have you ever heard a coffin sound?

Some may say this might be your last farewell ride  
Some may say this might be your last farewell ride  
Some may say this might be your last farewell ride

## Understanding the Editorial Method:

Matching colors correspond to passages which loosely or exactly mirror each other. The themes represented by each color are as follows.

Blue - two white horses in a line

Green - a last farewell ride

Red - taking me to my burying ground

Orange - a coffin sound

Asterisks comment on a few word choice variations within Beck's versions of *Farewell Ride*. These variations are interesting because they demonstrate the way in which Beck focuses on curating an aesthetic "vibe" in *Farewell Ride* rather than obsessing over the minutiae of textual meaning and demonstrates a shift from Blues to alternative music.

\*

In the Album Version Beck uses the word "love;" in the Remix Version he uses "fireworks." If Beck consciously chose to switch these words based on their meaning, it seems to suggest that Beck is referring to "love" in a cynical way in the Album Version, since using "fireworks" as a substitution for "love" means that this "love" is theatrical and entertaining but not deep.

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The switch from "dollar bills" in the Album Version to "shattered glass" in the Remix Version seems to demonstrate the way in which *Farewell Ride* has taken classic Blues imagery and slowly distorted it into a more 1990's indie aesthetic by remixing the Blues imagery with edgy, out-of-place symbols like "shattered glass."

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"The morning roses" are another example of an out-of-place symbol in Beck's distorted Blues imagery amalgamation.

## Introduction by the Editor:

*Farewell Ride* is a song by popular alternative pop and rock musician Beck Hanson. This edition considers three versions of the song's lyrics: the 2005 Album Version, the 2001 undeveloped precursor to the song called *Acoustic Blues*, and Beck's officially authorized remix of the song by himself and the band Subtle. The edition also presents two traditional Blues songs alongside *Farewell Ride* (as versions of it, perhaps) — *Ella Speed* by Mance Lipscomb and *See That My Grave is Kept Clean* by Blind Lemon Jefferson — because Beck is a known fan these songs and artists and lyrical parallels are abundant.

I hope that this edition raises questions for its readers about the song's lyrical and authorial history, like: should we consider *Ella Speed* and/or *See That My Grave is Kept Clean* to be versions of *Farewell Ride*? How much credit should we (or Beck) attribute to Mance Lipscomb and/or Blind Lemon Jefferson in the authorship of *Farewell Ride*?

I hope too that it raises questions about the social and thematic contexts surrounding the song, questions like: does Beck's use of Lipscomb and Jefferson's lyrics represent appropriation or inspiration? How did Beck transform and distort Blues imagery as he created music which shaped and contributed to the genre of alternative music? And what is the significance of Beck's identity as a White musician as he takes inspiration from or steals from Black Blues musicians like Lipscomb and Jefferson? Does this reflect broader themes in US music?

This is a visual edition. While the color coding is explained to the right, readers are encouraged to gain a more intuitive understanding of the variants' shared elements by glossing the edition visually before searching for specifics. Enjoy!

Sources include:

[whiskeyclone.net](http://whiskeyclone.net) which is a Beck fansite

[genius.com](http://genius.com) for lyrical fact-checking

Smithsonian Folkways for old Blues recordings