

The Ballad of Ira Hayes

By: Peter LaFarge

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Capo 1st fret

G C /b Am
 Gather round me, people, and a story I will tell
 D G
 About a brave young Indian you should remember well
 C /b Am
 From the tribe of Pima Indians, a proud and a peaceful band,
 D G
 They farmed the Phoenix valley in Arizona land.

Down their ditches for a thousand years the sparkling water rushed,
 Till the white man stole their water rights and the running water hushed.
 Now Ira's folks were hungry, and their farms grew crops of weeds.
 But when war came, he volunteered and forgot the white man's greed.

G /f# G7/f
 Call him drunken Ira Hayes
 C /b Am
 He won't answer anymore,
 D
 Not the whiskey-drinking Indian
 C/g G
 Or the Marine who went to war.
 G /f# G7/f
 Yes, call him drunken Ira Hayes
 C /b Am
 He won't answer anymore,
 D
 Not the whiskey-drinking Indian
 C/g G
 Or the Marine who went to war.

They started up Iwo Jima hill, two hundred and fifty men,
 But only twenty-seven lived to walk back down that hill again.
 And when the fight was over and Old Glory raised
 One of the men who held it high was the Indian, Ira Hayes.

Call him drunken Ira Hayes
 He won't answer anymore,
 Not the whiskey-drinking Indian
 Or the Marine who went to war.
 Call him drunken Ira Hayes
 He won't answer anymore,
 Not the whiskey-drinking Indian
 Or the Marine who went to war.

Now, Ira returned a hero, celebrated throughout the land
 He was wined and speached and honored, everybody shook his hand.
 But he was just a Pima Indian - no money, no crops, no chance -
 And at home nobody cared what Ira'd done, and when do the Indians dance?

Call him drunken Ira Hayes
 He won't answer anymore,
 Not the whiskey-drinking Indian
 Or the Marine who went to war.
 Call him drunken Ira Hayes
 He won't answer anymore,
 Not the whiskey-drinking Indian
 Or the Marine who went to war.

Then Ira started drinking hard, jail was often his home.
 They let him raise the flag there and lower it like you'd throw a dog a

bone.
He died drunk early one morning, alone in the land he'd fought to save.
Two inches of water in a lonely ditch was the grave for Ira Hayes.

Call him drunken Ira Hayes
He won't answer anymore,
Not the whiskey-drinking Indian
Or the Marine who went to war.
Call him drunken Ira Hayes
He won't answer anymore,
Not the whiskey-drinking Indian
Or the Marine who went to war.

Yes, call him drunken Ira Hayes, but his land is still as dry,
And his ghost is lying thirsty In the ditch where Ira died.

Call him drunken Ira Hayes
He won't answer anymore,
Not the whiskey-drinking Indian
Or the Marine who went to war.