

Ballad Of Ira Hayes
Johnny Cash

Artist: Johnny Cash

Song: (The)Ballad of Ira Hayes

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A **D**
Ira Hayes, Ira Hayes.

A **D**
Call him drunken Ira Hayes, he won t answer anymore;

E **A**
not the whiskey drinkin Indian, nor the marine that went to war.

A **D**
Gather round me, people. There s a story I would tell

E **A**
bout a brave young Indian you should remember well,

D
from the land of the Pima Indians, a proud and nobel band,

E **A**
who farmed the Phoenix Valley in Arizona land.

A **D**
Down their ditches a thousand years, the waters grew Ira s people s crops

E **A**
till the white man stole their water rights and the sparklin water stopped.

D
Now, Ira s folks were hungry and their land grew crops of weeds.

E **A**
When the war came, Ira volunteered and forgot the white man s greed.

A **D**
Call him drunken Ira Hayes, he won t answer anymore;

E **A**
not the whiskey drinkin Indian, nor the marine that went to war.

A **D**
There they battled up Iwo Jima Hill; 250 men,

E **A**
but only 27 lived to walk back down again.

D
And when the fight was over, and Old Glory raised,

E **A**
among the men who held it high was the Indian, Ira Hayes.

A **D**
Call him drunken Ira Hayes, he won t answer anymore;

E **A**
not the whiskey drinkin Indian, nor the marine that went to war.

A **D**
Ira Hayes returned a hero, celebrated through the land.

E **A**
He was wined and speeched and honored, ev rybody shook his hand.

D

But he was just a Pima Indian; no water, no home, no chance.

E

At home nobody cared what Ira had done.

A

And when do the Indians dance?

A

D

Call him drunken Ira Hayes, he won't answer anymore;

E

A

not the whiskey drinkin' Indian, nor the marine that went to war.

A

D

Then Ira started drinkin' hard; jail was often his home.

E

A

They let him raise the flag and lower it like you'd throw a dog a bone.

D

He died drunk early one morning, alone in the land he fought to save.

E

A

Two inches of water in a lonely ditch was a grave for Ira Hayes.

A

D

Call him drunken Ira Hayes, he won't answer anymore;

E

A

not the whiskey drinkin' Indian, nor the marine that went to war.

A

D

Yeah, call him drunken Ira Hayes, but his land is just as dry,

E

A

and his ghost is lyin' thirsty in the ditch where Ira died.