

City of New Orleans

Steve Goodman

Riding on the city of New Orleans
Illinois Central Monday morning rail
There are fifteen cars and fifteen restless riders
Three conductors and twenty-five sacks of mail

There all out on this southbound odyssey
And the train pulls out of Kankakee
Rolls past the houses, farms and fields
Passin' towns that have no names
And freight yards full of old black men
And the graveyards of rusted automobiles

Singin' good morning America, how are ya
Saying don't ya know me I'm your native son
Yes I'm the train they call the City of New Orleans
And I'll be gone 500 miles when day is done

And I was dealing cards with the old men in the club car
And it's penny a point, there ain't no one keeping score
Won't ya past that paper bag that holds that bottle
You can feel the wheels grumbling through the floor

And the sons of Pullman porters; The sons of engineers
They ride their father's magic carpet made of steel
And mothers with the babes asleep
Go rockin' to the gentle beat
And the rhythm of the rails is all they dream

Singin' good morning America, how are ya
Sayin' don't ya know me I'm your native son
And I'm the train they call the City of New Orleans
I'll be gone 500 miles when day is done

Nighttime on the City of New Orleans
Changing cars in Memphis, Tennessee
It's halfway home and we'll be there by morning
Through the Mississippi darkness rolling to the sea
And all the towns and people
They seem to fade into a bad dream
The old steel rails, it ain't heard the news

The conductor sings that song again
Its passengers will please refrain
This train's got the disappearing railroad blues

Singin' it's good night America, how are ya
Sayin' on't ya know me I'm your native son
And I'm the train they call the City of New Orleans
I'll be gone 500 miles when the day is done

Singin' it's good night America, how are ya
Saying don't ya know me I'm your native son
Well I'm the train they call the City of New Orleans
And I'll be gone a long, long time when the day is done

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