Homestead

Howard Zinn

Almost caught me a coyote today
A lowdown skunk of a dog I say
I fired my gun as he slunk away
But he'll be back againIt ain't been easy since my husband died
A widow woman at thirty-five
None can court me and few have tried
But I keep these homestead hopes aliveA couple of cows, a couple of hens
A mule that plows every now and then
But mostly balks and wears me thin
He can't talk but I swear he grinsDon't call it a prairie if you fence it in
Could call it a pasture but the topsoil's thin
It just might rain but then again
It wouldn't make no differenceEver since they built that damn railroad
Hobos been knocking at my door
Saying, "Lady, I will work for food
Can I haul you water, can I chop you wood?"Let me take a good look at you
Ain't nothing lye and hot water won't do
You can sleep on my porch if you're wanting to
And I give him my husband's old brown bootsBut in the morning he was up and gone
A chicken missing from my pen
I told you that coyote would be back again
But it don't make no differenceDon't call it a prairie if you fence it in
Could call it a pasture but the topsoil's thin
Sometimes I still take hobos in
But I walk to town when I need a friend

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