

Billy Vaughn, The Shifting Whispering Sands

I discovered the valley of the shifting, whispering sands
While prospecting for gold in one of our western States
I saw the silent windmills, the crumbling water tanks
The bones of cattle and burros, picked clean by buzzards
Bleached by the desert suns
I stumbled over a crumbling buckboard nearly covered by the sands
And stopping to rest, I heard a tinkling, whispering sound
Then suddenly realized that even though the wind was quiet
The sand did not lie still
I seemed to be surround by a mystery
So heavy and oppressive I could scarcely breath
For days and weeks I wandered aimlessly in this valley
Seeking answers to the many questions
That raced through my fevered mind
Where was everyone
Why the white bones
The dry wells
The barren valley where people must have lived and died
Finally I could go no farther
My food and water gone
I sat down and buried my face in my hands
And resting thus, I learned the secret
Of the Shifting, whispering sands
How I managed to escape from the valley I do not know
But now to pay my final debt for being spared
I must tell you what I learned out on the desert
So many years ago

When the day is awfully quiet
And the breeze seems not to blow
One would think the sand was resting
But you'll find this is not so
It is whispering, softly whispering
As it slowly moves along
And for those who stop and listen
It will sing this mournful song
Of sidewinders and the horn toads
Of the thorny chaparral
Endless sunny days and moonlit nights
The coyotes lonely yell
Of the stars seem you could tough them
As you lay and gaze on high
At the heavens where we're hoping
We'll be going when we die

Yes it always whispers to me
Of the days of long ago
When the settlers and the miners
Fought the crafty Navajo
How the cattle roamed the valley
Happy people worked the land
And now everything is covered
By the shifting, whispering sands

How the miner left his buckboards
Went to work his claims that day
And the burro's broke their halters
When they thought he'd gone to stay
Wandered far in search of water
On to old sidewinder's well
And there, their bones picked clean by buzzards
That were circling when they fell

How they found the ancient miner

Lying dead upon the sand
After months they could but wonder
If he died by human hand

So they dug his grave and laid him
On his back and crossed his hands
And his secret still is hidden
By the shifting, whispering sands

This is what they whispered to me
On the quiet desert air
Of the people and the cattle
And the miner lying there

If you want to learn their secret
Wander through this quiet land
And I'm sure you'll hear the story
Of the shifting, whispering sands

Shifting, whispering sands