

The Gringo's Tale

Steve Earle

Beggin' your pardon there stranger
You look like you're new to this town
We're a long way away from the beach here
You won't see many gringos around
Well I come from West Colorado
And I've wandered this world far and wide
I've lived for some years in the shadows
And my eyes are unused to this light
If you buy me a strong drink of whiskey
I will tell you the tale of my life
It's long and it's sad but it fits me
And it may bring a tear to your eye

All the men of my family were solidiers
The hard fightin' straight talkin' kind
When my turn came all that was over
But I'd already made up my mind
I was there when we blew though Grenada
And I still have to ask myself why
Then we took down that fool Noriega
That's where I caught the good colonel's eye
Well he asked me if I loved my country
And before I had time to reply
He regaled me with tales of past glories
I believed every one of his lies

So I left my old life behind me
Turned my back on my family and friends
And I did everything that they asked me
And I lost some sleep now and again
And I lived like a thief and assassin
I smuggled their poisons sometimes
Until I asked the wrong question in passin'

And the colonel himself dropped the dime
So if you're ever in west Colorado
Tell the folks in Durango goodbye
There's a price on my head and I can't go
So I'll just wait around here 'til I die