

## Phantom 309

Ferlin Husky

I was out on the West Coast, tryin' to make a buck  
And things didn't work out, I was down on my luck  
Got tired a-roamin' and bummin' around  
So I started thumbin' back East, toward my home town.

Made a lot of miles, the first two days  
And I figured I'd be home in week, if my luck held out this way  
But, the third night I got stranded, way out of town  
At a cold, lonely crossroads, rain was pourin' down.

I was hungry and freezin', done caught a chill  
When the lights of a big semi topped the hill  
Lord, I sure was glad to hear them air brakes come on  
And I climbed in that cab, where I knew it'd be warm.

At the wheel sit a big man, he weighed about two-ten  
He stuck out his hand and said with a grin  
"Big Joe's the name", I told him mine  
And he said: "The name of my rig is Phantom 309."

I asked him why he called his rig such a name  
He said: "Son, this old Mack can put 'em all to shame  
There ain't a driver, or a rig, a-runnin' any line  
Ain't seen nothin' but taillights from Phantom 309."

Well, we rode and talked the better part of the night  
When the lights of a truck stop came in sight  
He said: "I'm sorry son, this is as far as you go  
'Cause, I gotta make a turn, just on up the road."

Well, he tossed me a dime as he pulled her in low  
And said: "Have yourself a cup on old Big Joe."  
When Joe and his rig roared out in the night  
In nothin' flat, he was clean out of sight.

Well, I went inside and ordered me a cup  
Told the waiter Big Joe was settin' me up  
Aw!, you coulda heard a pin drop, it got deathly quiet  
And the waiter's face turned kinda white.

Well, did I say something wrong? I said with a halfway grin  
He said: "Naw, this happens every now and then  
Ever' driver in here knows Big Joe  
But son, let me tell you what happened about ten years ago.

At the crossroads tonight, where you flagged him down  
There was a bus load of kids, comin' from town  
And they were right in the middle, when Big Joe topped the hill  
It could have been slaughter, but he turned his wheel.

Well, Joe lost control, went into a skid  
And gave his life to save that bunch-a kids  
And there at that crossroads, was the end of the line  
For Big Joe and phantom 309

But, every now and then, some hiker'll come by  
And like you, Big Joe'll give 'em a ride

Here, have another cup and forget about the dime  
Keep it as a souvenir, from Big Joe and Phantom 309