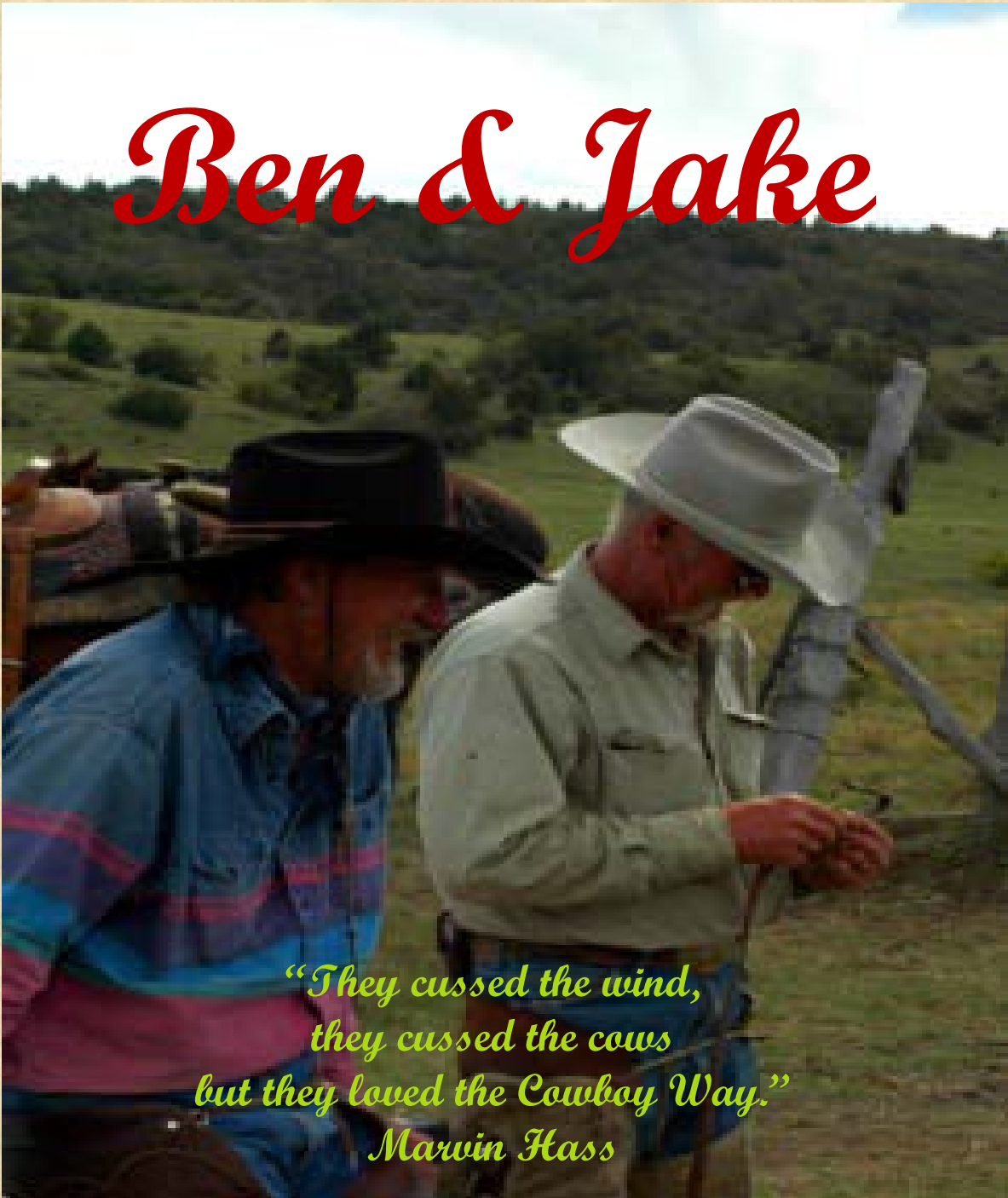


Ben & Jake



*“They cussed the wind,
they cussed the cows
but they loved the Cowboy Way.”
Marvin Hass*

Introduction

"Ben & Jake" Experience the unlikely predicaments of two ranchers who share a friendship and a fence line. Everything from unique encounters with mountain lions, to obtaining a bank loan for grass cattle, to trick or treating that turns sour. Topped off by Anniversary celebrations, buggy rides and Yoga lessons, all seen through the rich imagination of yours truly.

Marwin Hass

The Prairie Poet

Table of Contents

The Tree

The Rendezvous

The Team

The Buryin'

The Bank Loan

The Anniversary

Trick or Treat

The Wire

The Buggy Ride

Cowboy Yoga



THE TREE

**Ol' Ben and me had just rode up
To the line fence that we shared
We planned to jaw and get caught up
how both of us had faired.**

**Ol' Ben had been my neighbor
Every since we both were boys.
Now we were in those golden years
Still best of friends by choice.**

**We shared a chaw and began to jaw
'bout prices and cows and grass
then got to tellin' whoppers 'bout
the strangest things to pass.**

**Ben made reference to a three tongued calf
He raised as a family pet
"Its rate o' gain set records
Probably ain't stopped a'gainin' yet."**

**"Ya should'a of seen him grazin,
Took an acre at a one swath.
Them tongues of his a goin' wild,
Him eatin'at full trot."**

**Well, we lied some more, 'til it was time
To end this storyin' spree.
Then I layed it out before him
about this special talkin' tree.**

**"Ben," I says, "on that hog back ridge,
Above the Johnson peak
There's a cedar tree that stands alone
And the darn thing talks a streak.**

**He twisted up his grizzled face,
Then he looks me in the eye
"I've heard some tales in my day, Jake,
but that's an out right lie!"**

**Next he proceeds to question me
Wantin' every consarn fact
About when and what and why and such,
Had no time to answer back.**

**Well, I says, "Will ya simmer down
Quit gettin' so dad-burned hot
I'll take ya there, ya ol' crow bate
Judge them details on the spot.**

**It's a cedar tree a long time old
Has some roots above the ground
A trunk the size of a small stock tank
So big ya can't reach round.**

**"Well, what does it say?" Ben pipes up
"Directions on the whole,
'bout finances and health and life
And how to heal your soul."**

**Finances? Yells Ben, "Like what?"
"It told me to cull, by gee.
The fall before the 90's drought
Gospel truth from that Ol' tree."**

How 'bout that health advise? Ben rails.

“Just be plain on that!”

“Well, said to stop my chewin’

But I ain’t quite done it yet.”

“Another thing, was how to vote.”

“Vote!” Ben nearly lost his seat.

Said straight out, “Vote Republican,

Them Democrats are beat.”

“Well...thar ya are.” “Ol’ John McCain lost!
Explain that one to me!”

“You’re right, but had I pressed it,
There’d of been more from that tree.”

I’m sure it’d a come back clear and plain

Had I asked what that really meant

“That’s in the State and Locals

But not for president.”

“Why ain’t this tree been heard
before?”

“It has.” I says...”fer fact.”

I’ve seen ‘em leave, when I rode up
Still shocked and lookin’ back.

“A shakin’ heads, eyes bugged clear out,

Their faces full ’a fear

Prophecies from that cedar tree

And advice they would not hear.”

“Well...That’s quite a tale, Jacob Cobb.

It’s your wife I’m sorry fer.”

She surely has a cross to bear

‘Cause you’re plum crazy, that’s fer sure.”

“Ben,” I said in a serious tone

“Ya think I’d lie to a friend?”

“I’m not worryin’ ‘bout your honesty,

It’s your mind that’s round the bend.”

“Alright,” I says, “My doubtin’ friend.

I’ll meet ya there tomorrow”

“Where?” Says Ben “At the talkin’ tree.”

He shook his head in sorrow.

“I didn’t think ya was that fer gone.

But I’ll be there to please ya, Jake.

Won’t say nothin’ to the women folk

‘bout no meetin’...fer yer sake.”

Ol’ Ben rode west, I rode east

Thinkin’ ‘bout all that passed today

And daybreak at the cedar tree

And what that tree would say.



The Rendezvous

**It was gettin' light, with red and pink
When I reach the Johnson gate
There sat Ben on that ol' blood bay
I knew he could hardly wait.**

**"Howdy Ben,...how goes it pard?"
"Aw-right ... an' how 'bout you?"
"Got ya up 'fore breakfast, huh?"
We laughed an' had a chew.**

**"Now, where's this tree you're braggin' on?"
"Up yonder, beyond the peak."
"Well, let's get to seein' what this is.
I ain't got all this week."**

**"Ben?" "You off your feed?"
"Nooo...just want ta get this done,
I've heard yer storyin' all I want.
I'm here to end yer fun."**

**So we climbed the trail to Johnson Peak
Then let our ponies have a blow
And crossed the ridge at "Owl Hoots" notch,
To a strange world down below.**

**The country we was lookin' at
Was called a No Man's Land.
Boulders, pinons, deep ravines,
Cedars now and then.**

**The valley floor seemed deep and dark
Ol' Ben pulled down his hat.
"Consarn it Jake, you mean to say
we're ridin' down through that."**

**"Ya know this here is cat country.
Ya can see the signs real clear.
Tell me why ya come this way and
why a sane man shouldn't fear?"**

**We worked our way between the rocks
Headin' down the "No Man's" trail.
We pulled up at the Ute grave yard
Now Ben was turnin' pale.**

**Our horses started spookin' some
Crow hoppin' to the side.
Ben says, "Jake? Ya plum lost yer mind?
Here's where we quit this ride."**

**"Come on Ben," I flashed a grin
"Yer just a little tense."
"I wouldn't call it scared," says he
"I'd call it plain horse sense."**

**The horses shied and snorted some
As we passed them racks o' bone.
On lodge-pole scaffolds reachin' high
Toward a maker of their own.**

**Right then is when we saw the tree
'bout fifty feet away.
Standin' like a guard o' sorts
Ben turned completely gray.**

**"What's them bones, feathers, an' buffala skulls,
That stacked up pile o' rocks?"
"I reckon Utes have long since known
'bout the tree that sometimes talks."**

“Ya go up first,” says Ben real low.
So I knees ol’ Buck to a walk.
I reins in right before the tree
And waits to hear it talk.

“Hello Jacob,” it says to me.
“How’s life been treating you?
“I thought you’d quit tobacco?”
At that I lost my chew.

“I’m quitin’ here and now.” I says
in a sheepish sorta way.
“Sir...brought my friend, Ol’ Ben along
“He’s needin’ what ya say.”

“I welcome him,” the tree replies
“Should I stay or should I go?”
“I have some things for him alone,
That are not for you to know.”

So I wheels ol’ Buck and trots back down.
“He’ll see ya now...alone.”
“Dad burn it Jake, I figured such.”
So he rode to that cedar throne.

Then I seen him jerk back on the reins
And remove his hat...by gee
What seemed like a good half day had past
When he rode back down to me.

Ben’s got this great big nasty scowl
Like he’d swallowed a wild plum pit.
“Well...what did he say?” I questions.
“Can’t tell ya Jake...that’s it.”

Well...we both had simmered down a mite
By the time we reached the peak.
“So,” I says to change the tone o’ things
“Ben, ya heard what’s due next week?”

“Now what?” He says with that grizzled look
“Well...now jest hold yer seat
they’re sendin’ a team to A.I. cats,
soon as they come in heat.”

“Why in the name of my aunt Nell,
would ya want that kind’a grief?”
“Well,” I says, “found a gene, I guess,
that makes ‘em dislike beef.”

Who’s a doin’ this train wreck?”
“A K-State team, they say.
Folks workin’ on their masters
Up where we was today.”

Why K-State? Ben inquires again.
“Needed farm boys, strong and poor
Fast on their feet, with’a grip of steel
That ain’t seen no cats before.”

“They’re wantin’ education,
Oh they’ll get that done...fer sure.
Jest grabbin’ holt of a mama cat,
ya get a whole lot more than fur.”

We said our good byes at the Johnson gate,
Each headin’ his home way.
Then Ben yells back, “Jake, thanks ol’ hoss,
Fer everythin’...today.”

“And Jake...I’ll let ya know right soon,
What that tree put in my head,
But I need to do some thinkin’ first
‘For I tell ya all it said.”

I waved and we both rode for home
Thinkin’ ‘bout this mornin’s ride
A talkin’ tree, a Ute grave yard,
A good friend at your side.

Then my thinkin’ changed to lions
beyond the Johnson peak
And how ya ‘seminate ‘em.
Well...I guess we’ll know next week.



THE TEAM

**They waited at the dry creek spring
As Ben and me rode in.
The A.I. Team was pumped and primed
To have this day begin.**

**A goose neck held some crates of hounds
On a flat bed...Harley hogs.
The farm boys were all dressed in green
them bikers, in leather togs.**

**The ramrod sat a foldin' chair
Said, "Cat Man" on the back.
The farm boys carried hot shot sticks
With climbin' gear in packs.**

**"You fellas with the Stockmen?"
"Yes sir." "Just come to see."
"Make sure our funds are wisely used,
this party don't come free."**

**The Cat Man nods and pumps his arm
Says, "We got cats to breed."
Out come the hounds of every stripe
with them farm boys in the lead.**

**They shook a pelt to give the scent
them hounds cut loose in a rush.
A barkin' and a bayin'
As they tore down through the brush.**

**Ol' Ben says, "How ya know them cats
Are in their proper season?"
We been baiting them these last two weeks
Synchronizing...that's your reason."**

**'Bout then the hounds had treed a cat
the bikers tore a patch
a swingin' loops and dodgin' rocks
to circle round the catch.**

**They'd treed a she lion, that's fer sure
She was hiss'n'...but was purdy.
The farm boys took to climbin' up
With hot shots at the ready.**

**They nearly reached that mama lion
When she commenced to leave.
She landed on a Harley hog.
Behind the driver's seat.**

**That biker chose to let her drive
As he sought some safer space.
Them farm boys lost their footin'
Comin' down to join the chase.**

**The cougar cleared them hogs right out
As she rode direct at them.
Lost two bikers in the rocks
One off the canyon rim.**

The team limped back to meet the boss
Ben and me brought up the rear.
Ol' Cat Man says,"Implement phase two.
We're a movin' to high gear."

"Bring out Big Bongo," was the call
Out trots this catamount.
'Bout the size of a Texas freight train
with scars ya couldn't count.

Tied Bongo to the "Cat Man" chair
The Boss began his call.
He was yawlin' and a hissin'
When yonder mates began to squawl.

Big Bongo sprung to action
Lost the Cat Man by the spring.
Bongo planned to meet them gals.
Perhaps give one a ring.

The team picked up what all they could.
Ol' Cat Man's hide was raw.
"We'll send some one for what ever's left."
They went smokin' down the draw.

We found Big Bongo, all toes up
With a toothy cat like grin.
Figured we'd leave him for the team
And headed for the rim.

When we stopped at Johnson's peak
Ben says, "Jake, ain't that a scene,
Five mama cats on the hog back ridge
wavin' fer Bongo...or the team."

"Now this report for the Growers Board,
What do ya plan to say?
Use fancy words to smooth it out
Or the wreck we saw today!"

Ben, that "Cat Man" hung and rattled.
Ya need to give him that,
and Bongo with that smilin' face,
he ah...he died a happy cat."

I'm lookin' fer a kinder way
Of sharin' good and bad.
Ol' Ben says, "O.K. here's some words,
Us cowmen, we've been had."



THE BURYIN'

**The travois trail led to the porch
With Ol' man Johnson's folk
Ben and me with hats in hand
Heard the final good words spoke.**

**The Ol' man's nephew thanked us both
Said, "Appreciate your ride.
Uncle will be real peaceful there
With his Daddy by his side."**

**We lashed the pine box to the drag
Then said our hushed "So long"
Moved up the trail toward Owlhoot notch
Wonderin' how this might go wrong.**

**When we stopped to let the horses blow
It was time for Ben to speak.
"Jake, tell me the why of this,
takin' a dead man to this peak?"**

**"What was wrong with the little rise
Ten steps from his own back door?
Sun to greet him every day
A mighty restful place that's sure."**

**"Well, Johnson liked to be alone,
no wife, few friends...the rest.
His Pa was buried way up here
So the family thought it best."**

**"Exactly where's this Johnson plot
where we do the spooky chore?"
Ol' June Bug senses somethin's wrong
She's wall-eyed...and there's more..."**

**Ben, you're gona scare yerself
That jenny mule will be just fine.
We're headed fer them canyons
Across the big divide.**

**"Have ya ever been there,
I'm bettin' that it's no!"
"Well, not exactly." I replied
"Then here's where I say whoa."**

**"Now Ben...just simmer down,
Ya know I've got a plan.
We'll meet Ol' Nathan Many-Wives
Fer the canyons he's yer man."**

**"Many-Wives gives me the spooks,
With his singin' and prayin' and all.
Ya always feel him 'fore ya see him.
Makes a sane man's skin to crawl."**

**The sun was low and the shadows long
When the Canyon came in sight.
"Reckon will have to make our camp,
dig Ol' Johnson's grave by light."**

**We'd pitched our camp, undone the box
In the darkness stood a man.
Howdy Nate, where's yer horse
Didn't hear ya comin' in.**

**"No horses in Talkin' Canyon,
Will anger the spirits of the moon."
"We 'preciate yer wisdom Nate
We'll be in and out 'fore noon."**

**We ate and jawed about this place,
As shadows turned to night.
Ben laid the rifle cross his lap
Gave quick looks to left and right.**

**Many-Wives was talkin' 'bout
How the spirits came alive.
Ya could feel their hot breath up yer spine
Some were known to take a life.**

**'Bout this time Ol' Ben was struck
by a foul smell in the air
a hot breath breathin' down his neck
then somethin' pulled his hair.**

**He dodged to the right while leverin' a shell
spun and fired out of fear.
The first shot barely missed its mark
But the second took June's ear.**

**"Oh my Lord," was all Ben said,
As June turned tail and fled.
"Yer lucky it was a clean shot Ben,
it could'a been her head."**

**We found Pa's grave next mornin'
Buried Johnson by his side.
Set the marker we'd been packin'
That the family had supplied.**

**I read a Psalm from the good book
We Sang "Abide with me."
Many-Wives prayed to his many gods
Shook dust fer them to see.**

**We left Nate at the canyon mouth
Thanked him fer his time.
Turned our ponies to the east
Trailed a one-eared mule behind.**

**When we reached the Johnson gate
Ol' Ben says, "Jake, be clear,
The next time there's a buryin'
Call yer other friend, ya hear!"**

**"Ben, we thank ya kindly,
Was a kindness that ya done.
My partin' words about this ride is,
Yer right handy with a gun."**





The Bank Loan

**We was sittin' in the lobby
Of the Stockmen Drover's Bank
Ol' Ben was mighty edgy
Like a horse that was gettin' rank.**

**Waitin' for Ol' Hummer Brown
The President fer years.
We needed to stock the Johnson place
We planned on runnin' steers.**

**Ben says, "Ya know why
Folks call him by that name,
When ever ya need a dime from him
He'll say "Hmmm" then scratch his mane."**

**"Ya know he has a glass eye
can't tell which unless yer near.
If it's sympathy yer needin'
neither one will shed a tear."**

**"Now Ben, let me do the talkin'.
Don't say, "Hummer", it makes him soar.
Have coffee when he asks us nice
No Wild Turkey from his drawer."**

**"Why don't ya want me tryin'
that good whisky from the drawer."
Well Ben, "Ya loose yer sense a tact.
Ya've none to spare, that's sure."**

**"No tact? Why I'm a diplomat.
But I tell it straight and true.
Ol' Hummer tries to hoo-rah us,
I'll tell him what he can do."**

**"Mr. Brown will see you now."
Said the purdy gal so sweet.
So we amble in and take a chair
And wait fer him to speak.**

**Ol' Hummer, he says, "Howdy Boys,
How ya makin' out?
Hear ya got the Johnson grass
Always thought that place played out."**

**"Yes Sir, C.J., we surely do
The grass is comin' fine.
We hoped to run some yearlin's there
share the plan we had in mind."**

**"Plans are good." Says Hummer
"How many head ya had in mind?"
"We was thinkin' 'bout five hundred
That'd fix us up real fine."**

**Ol' Hummer takes a pause
Then scratches at his head
Comes out with his thoughtful...Hmmm
Does more figurin' on a pad.**

**"What ya boys got fer security,
I got depositers to keep in mind."
"Well you'd have the steers to mortgage
Plus we'd throw in a third beside."**

**"Hmmm." says Hummer, "That a fact.
How long ya want this for?"
"Well, we thought November first."
"Hmmm... that's six months or more."**

**“Ya boys want some coffee or
somethin’ stronger suit yer taste?”
Ben says, “Believe I’ll have some...coffee”
As I jab his ribs in haste.**

**“Well, fine boys, she’s all settled then.
Ten percent with a November date.”
“That seems a mite steep, don’t it Ben?”
We was thinkin’ more like eight.”**

**“I’m sure ya were.” Ol’ Hummer smiled.
He Hummed and figured and sighed.
Tallied numbers on a pad.
looked close with that one good eye.**

**Ol’ Ben had had his belly full
Came unglued before our eyes.
“Dag-nab-it Hummer, what’s the deal
ya’ve knowed us all our lives.”**

**“Thought ya financed beef in here,
What’s the answer...yes er no!
Don’t say no more ‘bout depositors,
Cause we’ll take our cash and go.”**

**“Now Benjamin, no need fer that.”
Ya need to see my point o’ view.
I’ve got de...responsibilities,
But I’m sure we’ll see this through.”**

**We left ol’ C.J. hummin’
And figurin’ with that one good eye.
Took our leave between them humms
Ben said, “Call us when we can buy.”**

**We were headin’ fer the pickup
When I said, “Ben, that sure went swell.
Let me compliment yer tact in there.
Ya express yerself real well.”**





THE ANNIVERSARY

Lizzie and me bin married
nigh on forty years.
She's kind to every livin' thing
There in laughter and in tears.

It happened in our bedroom
We was 'bout to go to sleep.
She says, "Jacob do you love me?"
"Ya know I do my sweet."

"Could we have a second wedding?"
It would please me some, it's true.
To hear you say you love me...
and I say that I love you."

Well, I gulped real hard and paused a mite
Said, "Dear, that sounds real sweet."
Ol' Liz she beamed from ear to ear
Then kissed me on each cheek.

Next mornin' she was on the phone
To plan the whole affair.
She says, "Ida, we were hoping
You and Ben'd be with us there."

What does Jacob think of this?
...he suggested it to me.
That man gets sweeter every year."
He said, "Let just have a spree."

This remarryin' was planned behind our house
Neath the biggest cottonwood tree.
There was plans fer food and drink and all
With the Parson, plus his fee.

"Jacob, what ya plan to wear
on this, our special day?"
"Well, I reckon some new Levis,
And my"...then saw it didn't play.

The big day came as big days do.
I was trussed up like a goose.
Black coat and striped britches
That tie felt like a noose.

Lizzie and Ida looked mighty fine,
In petticoats and lace.
Handsome women, if I do say so
And that smile on Lizzie's face.

Ol' Ben cleaned up pretty fair
New jeans, and a quarter horse tie.
Old suit coat, shined up boots
The buckle from sixty five.

"Do ya want a shot a red-eye,
Like ya did the first go round?"
"Believe I'll wait 'til the kissin's through
and Lizzie's settled down."

Well, the Parson lined us out
Like fence posts on the flats.
Ida and Lizzie and me and Ben
With us boys in brand new hats.

The Parson greeted all the folks
Explained why we was there.
Began to read the good book
'bout the love that lovers share.

'Bout that time the wind kicked up
with gusts that bent the trees.
Folks started to hunt cover
As some chairs began to leave.

The Parson lost his hair piece
Took a swing around the group
Landed on the weddin' cake
Just like ya threw a loop.

I lost my hat with the second gust
Ben grabbed his 'fore it could fly.
The petticoats on them two gals
Rose up to meet the sky.



Ben gives out with a snicker
He's wearin' a side-ways grin.
Says, "Them gals o'ours look purdy good.
Stuck with us through thick and thin."

They got the Parson's hair back on
Had a frosted edge in white.
The ladies got them dresses down.
We said, "I do" just right.

Ol' Lizzie kissed me hard and long
Then we turned and waved to the crowd
There was shakin' hands and thank yous
All the neighbors yelled out loud.

That night, in bed, we discussed the day
Lizzie says "It went pretty fair."
"Yes ma'am it surely did." I says.
"Glad the Parson got his hair."

"Jacob you made me proud today."
"It's a honey mooners' night."
I grinned and said, "Ain't that a fact."
Ol' Liz turned out the light.



TRICK or TREAT

Ben and Ida had come for a visit
When I pulled aside Ol' Ben.
Let's mosey out and check the stock
Got a new Bull down in the pen.

Well, it was comin' on to Halloween
I'd planned this crafty "Trick or Treat."
Had hid the gear behind some bales
In the stall where the cats all sleep.

"Ben, you slip into that skeleton suit
and that mask, where the harness hangs
I'll dress up like Dracula
With a cape and these bloody fangs."

I figured that he'd bow his neck
'bout the getup to scare the girls
but no sir, he flashed a toothy grin
said, "Well, let's give 'er a whirl."

We put a sheet on my horse Buck
With a face a witch would dread
Red eyes were flashin' on and off
Buck blew and shook his head.

So, we walked him right up on the porch
Then rapped on the door a spell
Lizzie took one peak and screamed at us
"We let out with that Trick or Treat yell."

She nailed Ol' Buck with her skillet
He went down on her second swing
Liz then commenced to work on me
'til I heard the church bells ring.

Ida shrieked and swung the kitchen broom
Ben had left the porch in haste
But he tripped and fell on his way down
She whacked that place below his waist.

Women armed with kitchen tools
Is a frightin' thing to see.
We gathered Buck and made the gate
As Ol' Liz pegged eggs at me.

We collected our wits down at the barn
Dern "Trick or Treat" that had gone amiss.
I was decidin' our course of action when
Ben moaned, "Just who's idée was this?"

Well, we ambled up with a limp and a hitch
Walked right in though we looked a sight.
Lizzie and Ida said, "You'll never guess
There were goblins here tonight."

About Halloween, no more was said
'til Liz and me got into bed.
"Jake, did you ever Trick or Treat?"
As I nursed that lump on my head.

"Why, nooo...can't say as I ever have."
Lizzie snickered as she turned out the light
She kissed that lump on my sorry head
Then said, "**Goodnight Dear Count,**
sleep tight."



THE WIRE

**I was workin' in the south corral
when Lizzie waved me in.
"Ida called, she was worried some
ain't seen hide nor hair O' Ben.**

**He'd rode out early yesterday
Took June Bug, at first light.
A headin' fer the Johnson place,
Was due home late last night."**

**So I saddle buck and packed some gear
Headed west fer the Johnson grass.
Thinkin' that he might'a camped
At that line shack near the pass.**

**I followed fence to "Owl Hoot" notch
Saw no sign up that-a-way.
Made a swing up north and then back east
Lookin' fer Ben's blood bay.**

**Comin' east from dry creek spring
I spied the mule and bay.
A grazin' by the dry creek wash
I started to yell...but thought I better pray.**

**Drew up beside Ol' June Bug
When I heard a raspy call.
"Jake, I need yer help down here
I've taken quite a fall."**

**Ben was caught in a bob wire trap
From a fence a long time past.
A rattler spooked the bay I guess
Ol' Ben was fadin' fast.**

**"Ben, yer wrapped up like a hay bale."
"Will ya get me out by gee.
I'm hurtin' on my one good leg
And Jake, I just can't see."**

**"That wire raked yer face real bad
and it's wrapped around yer knee.
Ben, ya lost a lot o' blood
I'll need to cut ya free."**

**I cut some lodge poles fer the drag
Lashed Ben to that saddle pack.
Tied a loop around us both
Told Ol' Buck, now back...now back!**

**Buck brought us up that dry wash wall
We was mostly bein' drug.
Ol' Ben was hurtin' fer a fact
When I finally caught June Bug.**

**"Dag-nab-it Jake just let me ride."
He staggered...then hit the ground.
I got him on that make shift drag
Took my rope and tied him down.**

**They was waitin' on the Johnson porch
When we come a draggin' in.
Ida and Lizzie got teary eyed
When they saw the shape of Ben.**

**We came to bring Ol' Ben home
Neigh a week in St. James West.
The leg was stitch like a cabin quilt,
Plus more on his face and chest.**

**“Glad to see ya up an kickin’.
Ya always been a wirey cuss.
But it’s a sorry way to get sweet Ida
to make such a special fuss.”**

**“Jake, we got steers a comin’ in
I won’t be much help this way.”
“Now Ben, don’t go and fret yerself
made arrangements yesterday.”**

**We’ll hire Ol’ Nate Many Wives
To help ‘til yer healed up more.
“Many wives...O my Lord,
this’ll be a wreck fer sure.”**

**“Now Ben ya stop yer worryin’
Nate’s good with a rope and a hoss.
Ya could use a few more prayers as well
Plus it’s yer chance to be my boss.”**

**“The women surely missed your charm
Don’t say much for female taste.”
“Jake, we’re burnin’ day light
half a day has gone to waste.”**

**That night gave Buck some extra oats
Sundown set the sky on fire.
I said a prayer for Ben and us,
Then cussed that dang bobbed wire.**





The Buggy Ride

I took my Liz on a buggy ride
It happen the end of May.
Was in between on seasons work
“Thought, why not take a day?”

‘Course I figured she would protest
“There’s work man, don’t you care?”
“No Sir,” she said, “I’ll fix a lunch,
Then wait...I’ll fix my hair.”

Well, I knew I’d hit the jackpot
When comments come that sweet.
So I hustled down to get them mares
And clean that buggy seat.

We kept ‘er in the ol’side shed
Weather tight and all.
Covered with an old grain tarp
pulled that buggy from its stall.

Them mares was mighty sassy
Their whole bodies come alive.
Just a dancin’ as I hit the seat
We come flyin’ up the drive.

I helped Ol’ Lizzie get on board
Said, “Ma,am ya swell my pride.”
Is yer man about...I’m hopin’ no
Like to take ya fer a ride.”

She smiles, then says, “You Ol’ galoot”
I winked with my one good eye.
Then off we tore on down the road.
Two lovers on the fly.

Drove on through them heifers
In that forty on the west.
I pointed out them new cross calves
“Believe this year’s are best.”

“Where we goin’ Jacob?”
Just like she didn’t know.
“We’re headed fer them cottonwoods.”
then I saw Ol’ Lizzie glow.

“Jacob, that’s where you purposed.
I still recall your fear.”
“To me it’s been our special place.
It’s sacred to me dear.”

Had lunch on an Indian blanket
Stretched out an’ watched the sky.
One puffy cloud a floatin’ through
Then another came on by.

“Liz,...ya know I’d do this
when I was young...a sprout.
Lay right here and wonder some
How my life would all play out.”

“Maybe I’ve made a difference
One thing I know that’s true.
There wouldn’t be no mark at all
If it hadn’t been fer you.”

‘Bout the time ya think ya know ‘em,
they’ll put ya in yer place.
Ol’ Liz she starts a cryin’
Puts her hands across her face.

“Aw shucks Liz, I am sorry,
Thought this day would bring ya
cheer.”
“It does,” she says, “I’m pleased...I’m
glad.”

Then she kissed me through a tear.
We were headin’ fer the main road
Past Ol’ Johnson’s, through the pines.
“Jacob could I drive the team?
Love to feel ‘em through the lines.”

“Well, these mares are mighty firey
but, I’ve got a thought we’ll try.
I’ll put my arms around ya dear,
Just in case they wanna fly.”

So...if yer life has hit some mud
Dark days is all ya see.
Take yer gal on a buggy ride
Did wonders fer Liz an’ me.





COWBOY YOGA

**I've felt the years deep in my bones
So my Liz, she sits me down.
Says, "Jake you're brittle as a stick, so
I've signed you up for a class in town."**

**She drove me to the meetin' place
Hauled me in like some common bum.
I'm whinin'...when this gal appears
Says "Mr. Cobb, we're glad you've come."**

**Now this little gal in a bathing suit
Leads me in to the big Ol' hall
The place was filled with women folk
Didn't see no men...at all.**

**"Ladies, this is Mr. Cobb
He's come to grow with us."
We shook and howdy'd all around
Was embarrassed by their fuss.**

**"Mr. Cobb, please remove your shirt."
So...I exposed my underwear.
"Now the spurs and boots and socks,
Spread your toes like a grizzly bear."**

**My Ol' dawgs have been tromped and stomped
they measure size fourteen
Got some fungus in them toes
The nails are thick and turnin' green.**

**Breathin' loud like a rank Ol' Bull
We assume this Injun pose.
When we postured like a Mountain
Felt folks were looking at my toes.**

I gave a grunt when we spread eagled
She says, "Mr. Cobb, don't drop your head."
Sounds are comin' from my body
And my face is turnin' red.

It happened in the Tree pose,
My focus went from fair to poor
I toppled like a sawed off pine,
Took twelve ladies to the floor.

The ramrod gal just smiled at me,
"We must keep our sense of humor.
Mr. Cobb, raise the corners of your mouth
Now please come into the Cobra."

"Smooth movements make smooth Yoga.
Oh Mr. Cobb...Mr. Cobb don't strain."
I pushed my hat back on my head
My back felt a twinge of pain.

I was makin' my break for freedom, when...
"Oh Mr. Cobb, we want you back!"
I said I'd give it careful thought,
Was sorry I caused the wreck.

Well, I tried it the next Tuesday
Thought I'd give 'er one last whirl
They clapped and cheered to see me back
Especially that ramrod girl.

It was in the One Legged Dawg
That downward stretched out pose
My back froze up like a banker's purse
I was numb from hocks to nose.

The E.M.T.s poked, prodded and probed
Decided not alter my dawgie pose.
So they strapped me to a skate board
Wheeled me out in my under-clothes.

Thought my Liz would split a gut
I was trussed like a turkey in traction
"Doc says it's only one more week
'til I'm out of this blame contraption."

Got a Get Well Card from the Yogi class
Said, "Mr. Cobb you're sorely missed,
You've given us all new insight
On The Dog...with a Cowboy Twist."



*"This is Marv Hass, the Prairie Poet,
saying, we'll see ya in the West."*