

“El Corrido de Gregorio Cortez”

Translated by Américo Paredes

In the county of El Carmen
A great misfortune befell;
The major sheriff is dead;
Who killed him no one can tell.

At two in the afternoon,
In half an hour or less,
They knew that the man who killed him
Had been Gregorio Cortez.

They let loose the bloodhound dogs;
They followed him from afar.
But trying to catch Cortez
Was like following a star.

All the rangers of the county
Were flying, they rode so hard;
What they wanted was to get
The thousand-dollar reward.

And in the county of Kiansis
They cornered him after all;
Though they were more than three hundred
He leaped out of their corral.

Then the Major Sheriff said,
As if he was going to cry,
“Cortez, hand over your weapons;
We want to take you alive.”

Then said Gregorio Cortez,
And his voice was like a bell,
“You will never get my weapons
Till you put me in a cell.”

Then said Gregorio Cortez
With his pistol in his hand,
“Ah, so many mounted Rangers
Just to take one Mexican!”

Source

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