

## Wild Days of Old

The dust settled, and the riders were gone  
The wild west blew away with an affectionate song.  
My grandpa was young, and restless as could be  
At the time of the story he was telling to me  
“When I was a young man, reckless and wild,  
There was fire in my eye- I was easily riled.  
So when my cowboy days were done, I went to the East  
Which did not change me at all in the least.  
I kept longing for the months I spent in the West  
(The ones I wasted among camels certainly weren’t the best)  
Among all the Muskies I happened to meet, there was only one who liked me as me.  
His name was Muso for short; we roamed around free.  
He never would tell me his full name though,  
I suspect if he had, we might’ve been foes.  
As it was, though, I liked my friend Muso quite well,  
But one day I desired to be alone for a spell.  
I sat on the hard ground, thinking of when  
I could brandish my pistol, make a ruckus and din-  
When all of a sudden, Muso took me by surprise,  
He jumped right in front of me in a ridiculous disguise.  
“Muso!” I cried, jumping and startled,  
I was taken aback, but he giggled and chortled.  
“I found it amongst Bin Amid’s prized stuff!”  
He was wearing a pink turban, stuffed with pink fluff.  
A bright yellow mask surrounded his profile,  
(I must say, the guy had a profound sense of style.)  
His garb gave me ideas of things we could do,  
So I took an old bandanna and grabbed my “glue”.  
“Get me some feathers!” I said with glee.  
We would frighten that tribe out of its normal beat!  
With our outfits prepared, we waited for night  
Then we jumped and we howled with all of our might.  
The leaders stumbled sleepily out of their tents,  
I’m ashamed to say what we did- our minds were quite bent-  
But Muso and I tricked those Sheikhs out of power,  
“Get down on the ground!” this was our finest hour!  
We tied up the Sheikhs and took over instead,

The rule we enforced was tyrannical and red.  
All our subjects were forced to minimize their merriment,  
And their days were full of complaints and laments.  
Finally one day, I again began to pace,  
I said, "Is this all there is for the human race?"  
I wondered of, after all, power ought to trump justice  
Walking to Muso, I said, "Is evil really for us?"  
Muso looked at me oddly, with suspicion-filled eyes,  
I knew then and there it wouldn't be "us" but just "I."  
It was tragic for me, to dispatch my best friend;  
I tied him up to a horse, and along I sent  
A trustworthy servant and a month's worth of food  
(You know, by this time, I did try to do good.)  
After that I set out to make all my wrongs right,  
I saddled my horse and rode off that night.  
First I started out West, to where I first was,  
(I left with an apology, like a humble chap does.)  
Once West, what I did was look up Mother's address,  
Once there I found out my Father had been put to rest.  
But the rest of my family was overjoyed to see me;  
They were fonder of me than I thought they should be.  
So I told them with tears what a fool I'd been  
All those years and what a mess I was in.  
They wisely advised me, and said "Whatever happens,  
We'll love you the same, with all the fixin's and strappin's.""  
So then Grandpa said, "My advice to you kids  
Is always repent of your many sins,  
Ask forgiveness and call for justice!  
For this is an essential part of man's purpose."  
The End.

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## **Adventure Wagon**

*I and the Men*

On a dusty road on an evening in June,  
I sat with my favorite pet, "Bandit" the coon,  
When along came a wagon, painted bright red,  
"Adventurous souls wanted!" the sign on it said.  
So I looked down at Bandit; asked him what he thought...  
He was very excited, and nodded a lot.  
So I flagged down the wagon and yelled to the driver,  
"I'm your man! You can believe it- I'm not known as a liar."  
Well the man stopped his horses, gave the friendliest of smiles,  
And looked at me closely for a little while.  
"You might do," he said with a grin  
Then he took out a bottle of what looked most like gin.  
So I tucked Bandit down tight with my arm,  
And hoped I wouldn't come to any harm.  
Then he said, "So, what are you good at?"  
Well, skipping stones, I could tell him of that...  
But somehow I thought he'd like something with fizz,  
So I replied, "What about this?"  
I took up Bandit, and showed him some tricks,  
It seemed to give the old man the laughing fits.  
So he said, "Climb aboard! Happy trails to us both!"  
Then on we went, yes, we then set forth.  
After a mile we met an old man,  
Whose clothes were entirely covered in sand.  
He stuck out his thumb, so we stopped once again  
He had a parrot on his shoulder, which made quite a din.  
The guy yelled, "I'd be 'intrusted'!" and hopped nimbly aboard,  
When he plopped down beside me, I got clubbed by his sword.  
But we all squished up tight, and rolled on to our fate,  
The wagon bumped along at a surprising rate.  
We entered a dark forest, which had a mossy road,  
And we nearly rumbled over an unfortunate toad.  
In the meantime, our newcomer filled us in on his life,  
He didn't have any kids or a wife-  
But his parrot stayed with him, his very best friend  
It said, in it's own words, it would stick till the end.  
I felt a bit sad for the man's tragic life  
(That he didn't have a kind, loving wife.)

The driver asked me, "So, what is your story?"  
So I told it and said, "You might find it quite boring."  
The fact is, not much had yet happened to me...  
"Things were quite dull till the time I turned three,  
But on that day I rode a horse!  
(With my father behind me to help me of course.)  
Well then Lightning the Faithful turned bad on the spot,  
For a week after that, a headache I got.  
But there really isn't a lot other than that,  
Save the time when my brother and I rescued the cat  
From a fearsome racoon, who I later named Bandit,  
And here he is, and he's very proud of it!  
But that's why I joined this very odd crew,  
Since he does such great tricks; you'd just love them, I knew!"  
"You were right about that, Sonny," our gang leader said,  
"But you know that we don't know what lies ahead?"  
The old man said, "There could be death! Death for us all!  
The dangers we face I don't take to be trivial.  
But you're just the sort who will keep on his head."  
And so saying, he laid down on his "bed."  
I was a tiny bit frightened, to say just the least,  
But my fortitude still had never quite ceased.  
Well, that put an end to our first day of travel,  
And now the story begins to unravel.  
What great exciting adventures would we face?  
Well, whatever they are, I shall face them with grace.

### *Introductions*

It was the second day of our journey,  
And our road took unusual windings and turnings  
When my fellow companions disclosed their names,  
The driver looked back and said his name was James.  
I looked at the old man and asked him as well,  
He said, "I was christened Roberto Bell.  
Some call me Bob, but Roberto's much nicer;  
My parrot's name's Squeak, and my sword's name is Slicer."  
Roberto looked at me with bright hazel eyes,  
They seemed to hold in them two overcast skies.

I laughed and said, "I'm Sir Franklin of Dilly,  
But please call me Frank, the other's all frilly."  
So we all settled back for the long trip ahead;  
It wasn't too long 'ere I wished to be fed.  
Then I heard Mr. Bell beginning to gripe,  
But I thought to myself, "Well, he's that type."  
James said to me, "Frank, will you look in my sack?  
You should find what you want in there- grub and hard tack."  
I opened it up, and to my great delight,  
There was some hard tack and yummy cheese, white.  
Bob grabbed some apples, and started to juggle,  
And refraining from laughing was quite a hard struggle.  
Sadly, he didn't seem to have too much talent,  
He fumbled, and all the apples he sent,  
Over the hard wagon's wood floor,  
So I grabbed one and started to eat like a boar.  
When we'd all had our fill, we felt merry and happy,  
And rode and told stories all the day laughing.

### *Gypsies and Freddie*

Well it wasn't till the third day our troubles began,  
It was muddy and we got stuck in the land.  
Bob and I pushed, while James led the horses,  
But it wouldn't get on, not between all our forces.  
Then as we stood there and moped, there began a great din,  
A man ran into the clearing and cried, "Help me in!"  
He jumped in the wagon, and there came rushing out:  
A great mob of gypsies, and each with a shout.  
A flash caught my eye; the great Slicer emerged,  
"Come on, let's go get them!" Roberto Bell urged.  
So James and I both grabbed fine sticks,  
And I cried out "Bandit! Now's the time for your tricks!"  
My brave little beast came at once to my aid,  
And his snapping and biting made those gypsies afraid.  
Bob fought valiently, with Slicer's help,  
And made an end of six or seven with frightening yelps.  
As for me, I did my best with the knife I had on me,  
You should have seen those ol' gypsies flee!

Squeak pecked at their eyes, and James fought with his club,  
And the noise that we made outdid their hubbub.  
At three afternoon we saw the last of their backs;  
(Most of them probably had a few cracks.)  
The stranger also had been in the fray,  
And now as we finished, he tried to slip away.  
But James cried out, "Hey there! What are you about?"  
Our guest came back and said, "No need to shout.  
My name is Friedrich, and I'm just traveling home,  
I thank you for your concern, but I'll go on alone."  
"Nay, but thank you," James said with great warmth,  
"Let's just hope you don't come to any more harm."  
Fred helped us push the wagon out of the mud,  
When we were removed, we drank that our health would be good.