

Wild Texas Wind

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Long before the wagons came, long before the rails
When buffalo moved in long waves on faint Comanche trails
Young men on Spanish ponies did what young men do
Keeping hunger from the door and the ghosts of men they slew
 Like prairie fire the wagons came, scattering foe and friend
 And the Plains turned upside down in a wild Texas wind

When vaqueros drove the longhorns up from Mexico
Across a thousand miles where no gentleman would go
Around the mesquite fires they dreamed of far away
Of girls they left behind them and going home one day
 Sometimes in the darkness a coyote would send
 A warning or a promise on the wild Texas wind

In the hard time between the wars with rain a memory
Black dust devoured the air like an angry sea
Pious folk looked in vain to the sullen sky
As preachers searched the Good Book for a reason why
 Those who cursed the darkness and those who had not sinned
 Were cast away together in that wild Texas wind

But sometimes the prairie grasses played a different tune
With dry branches scratching at the old face of the moon
As the shadow of a falcon wing flicked across the ground
And the dead air fluttered with a storm of thistledown
 A thousand Indian blankets at the river bend
 Fluttered gold and scarlet in that wild Texas wind