

SADDLE AND VERSE

TALES OF THE TRAIL

BY: COWHAND CHRONICLES



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THE OLD COWBOY

The Old Cowboy

I met an old man one morning sipping coffee
He had dark and deep sunken eyes
He had a weathered face and crippled body
From his voice, I could tell he was wise

He said Son, this life is full of pain and strife
It's often hard and rough
But a truly courageous man
is one who can take the guff,

He said I spent my younger years finding worth,
simply just cowboyin,
I spent many a lonely winter up north
holed up in a timber cabin

In the springtime, we trailed the mother beeves
Down the mountains to the ole home place,
To tell the truth, a new calf runnin' in the breeze
Will truly put a smile on yore face

When roundup came we gathered our herds
And penned 'em up real tight
But some of them mommas were sure protective
And gave us quite a fight

We threw fancy loops like the Houlihan
And us boys never did miss
The hides were sportin the Flying Y brand

On the prairie we punched mean snortin cattle
With our quick and sly cow ponies
Every day we saw a new battle
From the backs of bays, browns, and roanies

But we never did quit and we stuck to our guns
whenever things got hard
Even when life took sneaky little runs
and dealt us a bad hand of card

To get back to what I mentioned before,
About all that pain and strife,
you just have to learn to get used to gore,
Cuz this life cuts like a knife.

Many a man will never understand
Our views nor our trade
Day in and day out we ride for the brand
Our values nor honor will fade

You see son life is full of beautiful surprises
Its about them simple things
Its full of God's grace and bright sunrises
And good horseflesh in yore strings

The sight of open prairie with cattle a grazin
Will help to soothe yore sole
If you make life fun and go guns a blazin

EXPLANATION

The Old Cowboy.... This poem resonates very deep with me as it was the first I ever wrote and few people have had the privilege of reading it. I tried my best to instill what I personally find to be very key aspects of living a happy life. Afterall its a lot easier to conquer something when you can better understand what it is that your conquering.

Endurance and Resilience: The old cowboy in this poem shares how his life was full of hardship and challenges—physically, emotionally, and mentally. Yet, he teaches that true courage lies in taking life's difficulties in stride, enduring with grace, and never giving up.

Love for Simplicity: Despite the pain and tough conditions, the cowboy finds joy in simple things like the sight of a calf running, a well-placed rope, and the beauty of wide open spaces. His wisdom stems from recognizing life's small yet profound pleasures.

Connection to Nature and Tradition: I tried to paint a mental picture of the land, cattle, horses, and the seasonal cycle of a cowboy's job and reflect a life connected to nature, tradition, and heritage. To me "The old Cowboy" represents a fading way of life that holds honor, values, and a deep bond with the natural world.

Wisdom through Experience: The old man's words convey a lifetime of hard-earned wisdom. He's teaching the younger generation that while life is full of "guff" and challenges, there's beauty, purpose, and meaning to be found in persistence, humility, and enjoying life's simple moments.

Spiritual Undertones: I'm a firm believer in my faith and I tried to implement that spirituality throughout the poem—mentioning "God's grace" and the beauty of sunrises—which shows the peace and purpose not only in the land and his work that the cowboy finds but also in his God.

THE FLYING Y

The Flying Y

Gather around this campfire
 you young and wild hands
 And listen to this tale transpire
 Of the outfit that once ruled these lands

The outfit of which I speak
 was truly a sight to see
 She ran o'er 2 thousand head at her peak
 and was where all young hands wanted to be

She stood for honor and showin respect
 All the boys were sure livin true
 The boss treated ya fair and under stars ya slept
 When she fell it made me blue

But Time don't stop, she just trudges on
 Like the iron horses with their great haul
 You can't fight 'er pard, I'm afraid her days are gone
 The great Cow Outfits too will fall

This Outfit the boys viewed as a Mother
 And for it, any of 'em would die
 For she gave great care for each and every brother
 The once legendary... Flying Y

EXPLANATION

The Flying Y... I thought I'd have a little fun with poem by taking my own Cattle Brand and portraying it as one of the big cow outfits that ruled the open range in the height of the cattle industry. I read a lot of history books on the days of the old cowboys and trail drives. They truly tell a glorious story of the days when men were free and weren't ruled by governments or other men but rather by a code. The big ranches of those days were called "outfits" and each outfit was its own community and had a special bond between the cowboys that worked for it.

The Glory of a Legendary Outfit: I Portray The Flying Y as a legendary place, where young cowboys dreamed of working. It stood for respect, honor, and a sense of belonging. I wanted the reader to view the outfit almost as a living entity—a "Mother" that nurtured and cared for its cowboys. It represents a golden era of ranching, a time when cowboys lived by certain values and principles.

Inevitable Passage of Time: This world went and got it self in a big damn hurry too soon and it truly is a shame to see it, and I wanted to show that through the lines of this poem. One can see that despite the greatness of the Flying Y, the poem laments the unstoppable march of time. Just as the iron horses (trains) came to replace older forms of travel, so too did time erase even the greatest of ranches. The poem conveys a sense of sadness about how change is inevitable, and no matter how much something means to people, it cannot withstand the passage of time forever.

Brotherhood and Loyalty: The cowboys' deep loyalty to the Flying Y is palpable. They would have sacrificed everything for the outfit, and this camaraderie is central to the poem. The Flying Y can be viewed as more than just a ranch—it's a community, a family of men bound together by a shared purpose and values. This sense of brotherhood is one of the things most mourned as the outfit falls.

Elegy for a Lost Way of Life: On a broader level, I wanted this poem to be an elegy for the end of a way of life. The "fall" of the Flying Y is symbolic of the decline of the cowboy culture and the great cow outfits that once thrived in the open range. It's a reflection on how modernization and the changing world have diminished these once-iconic symbols of the American West.

Romanticized Idealism: The poem paints the Flying Y in a romanticized light—honorable, respectful, fair, and full of camaraderie. I put myself in the shoes of one of the ranches who had it made during the height of the cattle Kingdom. But now as time marches on must see it all break-up and drift away like sand. This idealism helps the reader look back with fondness, and see the past through rose-colored glasses in a way.

COPENHAGEN

Copenhagen

Life can sometimes be stressful
It will put you to the test
So if you feel like going mental
Remember to go with the best

This remedy comes in a can or roll
It can lift you from any rut
So when you start to feel life's toll
Pack your lip with snuff or long-cut

When I'm out there slaving
I stop to take the time
Cuz Just one little pinch will satisfy the craving
And it tastes fine as wine

From the front pocket of a shirt
To the ring on a pair of jeans
It sure tastes better than all that dirt
That comes with a cowboy's routine

I ain't saying that it's a good habit to start
But sometimes it sure is handy
I don't know if ever with it I'll part
Now ain't that just Jim Dandy

EXPLANATION

Copenhagen... This poem was written primarily as a joke. I believe I wrote it on the side of my notebook whilst daydreaming in my Stats 218 class in Hardin Hall in the fall of my Junior Year of College. I was singing the song "Copenhagen" by Chris Ledoux in my head and thought, hey I should write a poem about that. Looking back now I find it kind of ironic as it was my Junior year of highschool that I started chewing tobacco. It was during the days of Covid-19. I was at a Branding for my Uncle and it was a cold and dreary day. There was a big storm rolling in and my good buddy asked me to help him get some of his own calves doctored up before the storm hit. So we took off at a lope across the pasture. I spied a big black calf that had a little scours and so I put a line on him and had him stretched out and was drawing the vaccine from my saddlebags when another cowboy rode up.

He goes, *"You ever had copenhagen?"*

To which I replied *"Once when I was about five years old my father gave me some in the feeding tractor and I puked as soon as I put it in. I gave that up real quick."*

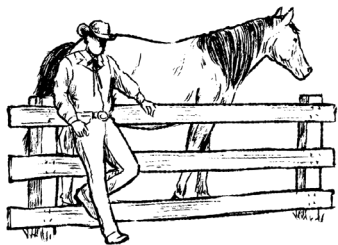
"Here, put this in your lip." He says while tossing me the can. So I packed my lip full and commenced to doctoring this sick calf. About five minutes went by and I swore I was gonna tip outta my saddle I was so dang dizzy. This is a story I'm sure many will find surprising to read but those that truly know me as person will hopefully find the same humor and irony as I did while writing this poem. I've sure had a lot fun times in the saddle. But I'll never forget that day I started chewing that darn stuff!

HORSES

"A man afoot is no man at all" A cowboy prizes things in this life that are more on the simpler side of things. We value a good cup of coffee in the morning while watching the sunrise, a well trained dog, a good girl by our side, and the overall beauty of Gods creation that we have the honor of being stewards of. But above all things we value a good horse. You can tell alot about a man based off how he treats horses, what kind he rides, or even how he rides. Cowboys and their horses share a deep, almost sacred bond that goes beyond a simple working relationship. In cowboy culture, a horse isn't just a means of transportation or a tool for herding cattle, they are loyal partners, a trusted companion, and often a reflection of a cowboy's spirit and character.

To me, the relationship between cowboys and their horses is built on trust, respect, and a shared understanding of the land and the life they lead. A cowboy and his horse share a partnership that reflects not only the cowboy's independence and strength, but also his need for connection. That connection is with his horse, with nature, and with the code of the cowboy way.

This section of poems was written to help portray the importance of a horse in a cowboys life and how we view them as more than animals. We see them as our "co-workers" to put it into modern terms. And we would sure be lost without them.



THE BAY

The Bay

I would like to tell a story
 About a cowboy and his horse
 It's one of joy and glory
 Together they were quite a force

It all began in the month of March
 The year I don't recall
 A young cowboy with plenty of starch
 And a new horse in his stall

He knew what he had the day he was born
 He could tell he would serve him well
 With wild cattle roped and dallied to the horn
 That boy sat deep in the swells

On top of this little horse named Tequila
 That boy rode and punched cows all day
 They preferred open prairie to the rodeo arena
 This cowboy and his bay

He was big and tall and colored brown
 He was also good and strong
 He never did let that ole boy down
 He could go all day long

Yep, these two were quite the pair
 They were the best help around
 A cowboy with a thousand mile stare
 A good horse on the ground

That boy and horse understood each other
 Their relation never did fray
 They were just as close as brothers
 The cowboy and the Bay

EXPLANATION

This poem was written about one of my most prized horses, Tequila. He had an interesting arrival into this world and I came into possession of him by chance and nothing else. The good Lord wanted decided that I was at the point in my journey of becoming a cowboy at which I was ready to work with a young horse. I initially came into possession of his mother Sunny. Whom I had received from my uncle Jud when I had outgrown all my other horses. He sent her up to the home ranch and I was riding her on a Sunday to pair out and move cattle around as we were smack dab in the middle of calving season. Never in my life had I rode a horse and just felt that connection. The kind that you just know is gonna last and is almost telepathic. I was so excited to have this connection with a horse, little did I know I was bound to feel that connection twice as strong with yet another horse. It turns out that that mare Sunny had been bred by a stud that nobody knew was a stud. So that next morning, March 25th, 2018, Tequila was born and what the Lord had in store for us was something nothing could have prepared me for. We formed a strong bond and we both conquered whatever the open range threw at us.

We covered thousands of miles and tamed many wild cattle. He really showed me how to be a horseman and a better cowboy. He taught me patience and how to invest my time into something and stick with it till the desired result came about. First time I ever swung a rope on him he about killed me, But it wasn't long till we could hardly be seen without some big and wild cow coming tight on the end of the long rope. I taught him a lot and he taught me and everybody complemented us on our ability to go all day and work hard. He allowed me to be noticed as a cowboy back home and more and more people began to ask me for help to move cattle, rope and doctor, and my father left the management of the home herd in the hands and hooves of Tequila and I. I cried the day he died, but there's a poem for that to come.

THE HORSE

The Horse

The greatest gift that the good lord gave
 To some may be a simple critter
 But to a cowboy like me it sure is my fave
 He lifts me whenever I'm bitter

This gift of which I speak is quite a beauty
 Without it I'd be lost
 It carries me and knows its duty
 To protect it I'd pay all cost

This critter is smart and rather kind
 It always knows its role
 It knows how to get me out of a bind
 It always carries the toll

He came from lands far away
 And made his home on the range
 To cowboys he opened the doorway
 And helped to set the stage

He's tough enough to handle mean cattle
 Yet gentle enough for the kids to ride
 With digity he carries your saddle
 And serves his cowboy with pride

The lord gave the cowboy a tool
 It's loyalty and knowledge is quite a force
 He'll teach you more than you'd learn in school
 His name... is the horse

EXPLANATION

I've rode many a good horses and covered a lot of ground with some good mounts between my legs. So I thought it only right to put my appreciation for these great creatures into a poem. I wanted this poem to view the horse as far more than a mere animal—it is a "gift" from God, which shows my own as well as cowboys everywhere sacred, almost spiritual connection with them. For the cowboy, the horse is essential, both physically and emotionally. They are a source of strength and comfort, especially in difficult times, and seem to always be able to lift their cowboy's spirits when he feels "bitter."

A horse is praised for its loyalty, intelligence, and dependability. They know their "duty" and their cowboy can rely on them to help him navigate tough situations ("get me out of a bind"). This reflects the profound trust and partnership between the cowboy and his horse, with the cowboy willing to protect the horse "at all cost."

In this poem the horse is portrayed as both strong and gentle. It can handle the rough work of "mean cattle" yet is also "gentle enough for the kids to ride." This duality makes the horse an ideal companion for cowboys, as it embodies both toughness and compassion, qualities that are essential in the cowboy's lifestyle. This stems from my desire to have a family and teach my kids to ride someday. I grew up riding horses that were bred to WORK. They would throw wild cattle and were right and properly mean old buggers. But when it came to kids their eyes would lose their seriousness and become reflective. It wasn't a mirror that I looked into and saw myself as a cowboy, it was horses eyes.

I tried to acknowledge the horse's origins, having come "from lands far away" to make its home on the range. This speaks to the horse's pivotal role in shaping the cowboy way of life and the development of the West. The horse "opened the doorway" for cowboys, playing a central part in their survival and success. Back in the old days of the open range horses were of utmost importance and a good horse was a cowboys top prize and was sothing they held in high regard. The horse allowed cowboys to travel far distances and do their work effectively. Without horses we would have never had cowboys in my opinion.

Growing up I was never fan of school and am still not. I don't learn in a classroom environment and every main lesson I have ever learned has been from the company of a horse. So I tried to implement that the horse imparts wisdom with the line ("He'll teach you more than you'd learn in school"), emphasizing that the lessons a cowboy learns from his horse—about nature, survival, and partnership—are invaluable. The horse becomes a teacher and guide in the cowboy's life.

GOODBYE DEAR FRIEND

Goodbye Dear Friend

The wind is cold, the sky is grey,
And all my strength has slipped away.
My horse is gone, my pride, my soul—
Left me with this aching hole.

We rode the dawn, we chased the dusk,
Through dust and sage, through faith and trust.
But now the trail has split in two,
And I ride on without you.

Oh, steady hooves, now stilled by time,
Your thunder gone, your hills to climb.
I held your reins with hands that bled,
But fate untied the knot instead.

I feel the echo in the air,
Where once your shadow lingered there.
How can I ride, how can I roam,
When half my heart has flown home?

A cowboy's life is rough and lean,
But you made the miles feel serene.
Now all that's left is dust and bone,
And the empty sound of riding alone.

So I'll lift my hat to that last ride,
Where you gallop on the other side.
Though I stay grounded, scarred, and torn,
Your spirit runs where dreams are born.

EXPLANATION

Goodbye Dear Friend is a heartfelt elegy, mourning the loss of my top horse Tequila and was by far the hardest poem for me to write but I felt I should honor our times in the saddle together. I wanted to symbolize not only the physical loss of a beloved companion but also the emotional devastation of losing a piece of myself. I tried to use themes of grief, loyalty, and the profound bond between a cowboy and his horse. I wanted to write this poem from a first person view which is not very common for me to do but yet it still lets the reader put his or her self in the shoes of the cowboy losing his horse.

I started with a somber tone: "*The wind is cold, the sky is grey, / And all my strength has slipped away.*" The day he I lost Tequila I simply felt weakened and hollowed out by the loss of his life, so I tried to make it seem as if his death had taken a part of his spirit with it. Because to me a horse isn't just an animal; so I described it as my "pride" and "soul," making the grief deeply personal.

The imagery of the split trail in "*now the trail has split in two, / And I ride on without you*" emphasizes the separation that death brings, forcing the cowboy to continue alone. The trail metaphor reflects life's journey, now divided between the past shared with the horse and the future, which feels uncertain and empty without it.

The relationship between the cowboy and the horse is built on faith and trust, as reflected in lines like "*We rode the dawn, we chased the dusk, / Through dust and sage, through faith and trust.*" The cowboy's life, full of hardships and trials, was made bearable and even beautiful by the companionship of the horse. This connection runs deep, blending survival and loyalty. The line "*I held your reins with hands that bled*" evokes the hard work and sacrifice shared between the cowboy and horse, symbolizing both physical effort and emotional investment. The bond is not just practical but profound, built over many shared trials.

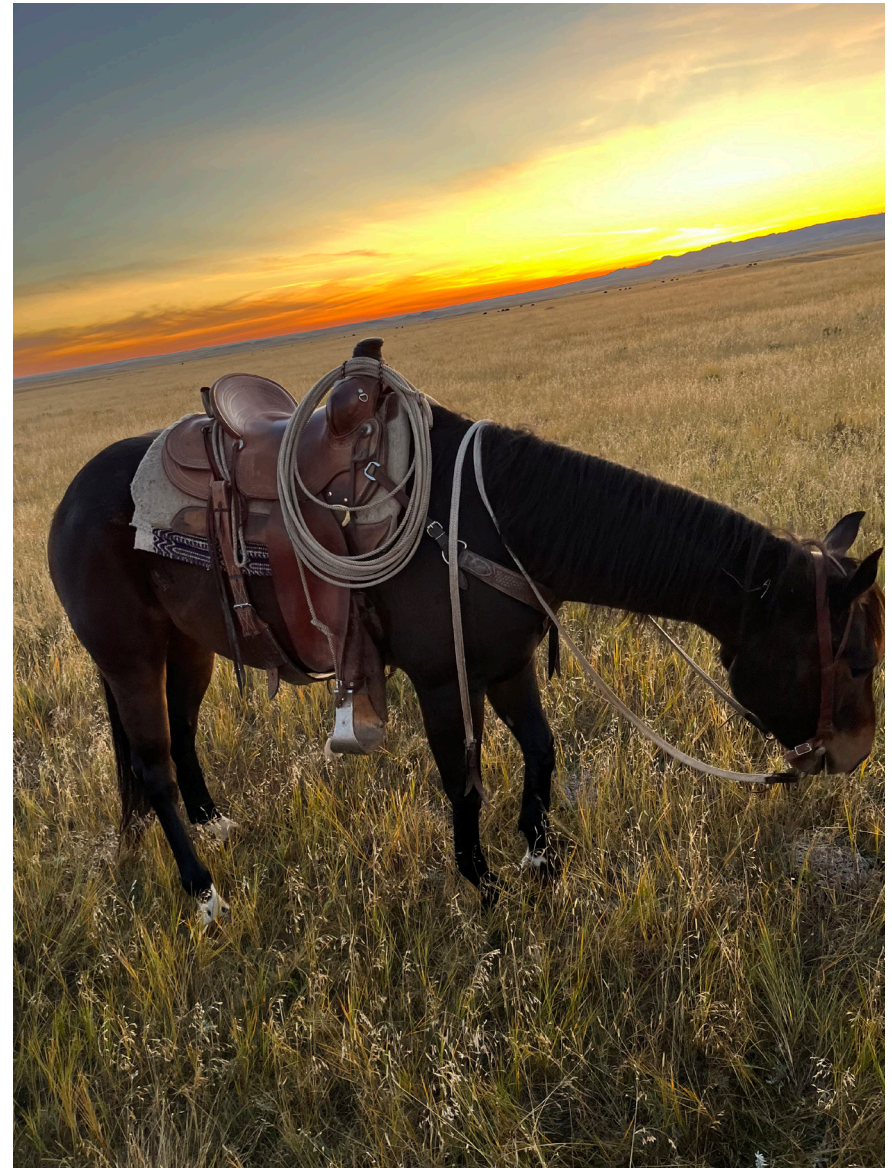
The horse is more than just a means of transportation or a working animal. It represents the cowboy's freedom, strength, and resilience. The line "*Your thunder gone, your hills to climb*" personifies the horse as a powerful, natural force now stilled by death. The sense of quiet left behind echoes the vacuum the horse's absence creates. The metaphor of the "*empty sound of riding alone*" captures the loneliness and incompleteness the cowboy feels without the horse. The horse wasn't just part of the cowboy's life—it was part of the cowboy's identity.

EXPLANATION CONTINUED

The cowboy grapples with the pain of moving forward, feeling lost: *"How can I ride, how can I roam, / When half my heart has flown home?"* This line reflects the deep emotional wound left by the horse's passing, as though a vital part of the cowboy has been lost forever. However, the poem gradually shifts toward a bittersweet acceptance. In the final lines, the cowboy imagines the horse galloping on *"the other side,"* (Heaven) a place where *"dreams are born,"* showing that the horse's spirit lives on in some other realm, free and untethered by time. The cowboy's final act of lifting his hat is a tribute, a final farewell to a trusted companion.

The poem captures the cowboy's acknowledgment of mortality, both his own and that of his horse. *"Though I stay grounded, scarred, and torn, / Your spirit runs where dreams are born"* shows my belief in some form of spiritual transcendence, where the horse's essence lives on, even though I am left behind to bear the scars of the loss. I wanted the idea that the horse's *"spirit runs"* in a place of freedom to imply a kind of solace—that while my earthly journey continues, my horse (Tequila) has found peace and continues to live in memory and spirit.

The solitary nature of a cowboy's existence is highlighted. Even before the horse's passing, the life was *"rough and lean,"* but the horse made the journey feel *"serene."* Now, without the horse, the cowboy faces an even more isolating existence, and the weight of that loneliness is keenly felt. The cowboy's life, full of *"dust and bone,"* becomes a metaphor for the harshness of existence without the companionship and trust of the horse, emphasizing the emotional and physical emptiness that follows loss.



BRANDING

Branding

There's many things that take place in a year
Working as a cowboy
There's one that's the highlight of my career
It brings me the utmost joy

The work will start before the light of day
As we ride out o'er the range
To see it firsthand is quite a display
My first was at a very young age

We ride the hills and ride the valleys
We comb through every draw
Every cow and calf is tallied
And pushed forward with a yip and a yaw

We get em corralled and commence the sort
The calves will sometimes take flight
To rope and drag em back is a sport
Just pray that your cinch is tight

We pen the calves up and start the fire
We load the syringes with vaccine

A good sharp knife is what I require
For I want the cuts to be clean

We send the riders into the herd
And with their ropes, poetry they write
Two feet is what would be preferred
But one foot is sometimes all right

They drag em out and the wrestlers descend
Who throw em on their sides
If it was a good loop they may commend
As the irons burn their hides

The calves will bawl and give a scream
A few may try to get away
But it's just every cowboys's dream
To rope em back and save the day

This work is hard for both man and steed
It requires great skill and finesse
From ropeburns or cuts you'll surely bleed
But we love it nonetheless

EXPLANATION

I've been a cowboy for 21 years now which hard to believe! We do a lot of things throughout the span of a year but out of everything that fills up my year, branding day is always the one I look forward to the most. There's just something about it that feels like the pinnacle of my work, like everything leads up to this day. It's not easy by any means, but the joy it brings me is like no other.

The work starts before the sun even rises, but that's part of what makes it special. There's nothing like heading out across the open range at first light, riding out with the crew. The scene we create with the riders combing the hills and valleys, searching through every draw to find the cattle is just simply beautiful to me. I've been a part of this since I was a kid, and every time I saddle up for branding, I'm reminded of how it felt the very first time. When we finally round up all the cattle, there's a sense of relief but also anticipation. Getting them into the corral is one thing, but sorting them is a whole different game. The calves get nervous from being gathered up and they lose their mothers and will try to get back to the last place they saw them. So some of them get a little wild and break off and try running away. That's when it turns into a sport, and you've got to be ready. A good cowboy knows how to rope and drag them back, and believe me, you pray your cinch is tight because it can turn into quite a ride if it ain't!

Once we've got the calves penned up, the real work begins. The fire is lit, the syringes are loaded with vaccine, and the smell of smoke fills the air. I grab my knife to castrate and it's sharp because I need it to be. When I make those cuts, they've got to be clean to avoid harm to the cattle. That's my job, and I take pride in doing it right.

We assign ropers and send them horseback into the herd, and that's when the ropes start flying. Watching them rope calves, is like poetry in motion. Ideally, they'll catch both feet in their loop, but sometimes you just get one, and that's good enough but just know you'll catch some jokes from the other cowboys. After they've caught two feet they drag the calves out, and we've got the wrestlers ready. They move fast, throwing the calves down so we can get the irons on them.

The calves will bawl, and some will try to squirm away. I remember the sound of it, how it echoes across the corral. They might fight it, but that's all part of the day. And if one slips away, well, that's the moment every cowboy waits for—to rope that run-away calf and bring it back. There's nothing like it, that rush of saving the day when things go awry.

EXPLANATION CONTINUED

By the end of it, we're all worn out. Me, my horse, the whole crew. It's hard work, no doubt. You'll get rope burns, cuts, maybe even a bruise or two. But that's just the way of things out here. Even though it's tough, there's something about it that keeps me coming back year after year. It's the skill, the finesse, the pride in a job well done, and the shared experience with the team and the horses. It's not just work—it's a way of life, and I love it, every single part.

A BOY AND HIS FATHER

A Boy and His Father

As a boy I had a hero
A man bigger than life
Wherever he went I would go
Hes the reason I'm alive

When I was a young'un
Holding on to his shirt tail
I learned how the ranch was run
Taking in every little detail

He taught me what he knew of horses
And how to work with cattle
What I learned was better than college courses
His values you couldn't rattle

He worked all day and never did tire
He simply loved what he did
From him a work ethic I acquired
Me, a wanderlust kid

On that ranch he raised a family
And always gave his all
He possessed a certain mentality
I never did see him fall

He was my very best friend from day one
He was there when I was down
I knew that he loved me a ton
And he never did wear a crown

Many a day we didnt get along
You can bet we had our fights
We often butted heads like a gong
Sometimes our words had bite

But I could come to him in worry
And he would not be bothered
Many relations have a rocky story
Like that of a boy and his father

EXPLANATION

As a young boy, my father was larger than life to me, he was my hero. I remember looking up at him, thinking he was the strongest, smartest man I'd ever known. Wherever he went, I followed, hanging onto his shirt tail learning the ways of the rancher. Everything I know today about ranching, horses, and cattle all comes from him. I never really needed school the way other kids did because the lessons I got by his side were more valuable than anything a classroom could offer.

I remember watching him work, day in and day out, never once complaining. He'd be up before the sun, ready to tackle whatever the day threw at him, and I'd be right there, trying to keep up. He taught me how to handle horses, how to rope and work cattle, but he also taught me something deeper. That was how to stand by your values, no matter how tough things got. His strength wasn't just in his hands; it was in the way he never wavered, never let life shake him.

I wanted to be just like him. That's where I got my own love for the open land, my work ethic, my drive to keep pushing even when the days got long and the work got harder. He raised me and my siblings on that ranch, always giving everything he had to provide for us. He and my mother built more than a livelihood—he built a life that my siblings and I could be proud of.

My dad wasn't just my teacher or my role model, though. He was my best friend. From the time I was a little boy, I knew he was always there for me, especially when things got tough. Whether I was struggling with something or just feeling down, I could always count on him. There wasn't any showiness about him; he didn't need to boast or put on airs. He loved me in his own quiet, steady way.

Of course, we didn't always see eye to eye. Like any father and son, we had our share of fights. There were times when our arguments were fierce, and I'd storm off, fuming with frustration. But even when we butted heads, even when our words were sharp, I knew deep down that those disagreements didn't change how much we cared about each other. Our bond was solid, even when the heat of the moment made it seem otherwise.

The thing is, I could always turn to him when I needed him. No matter how bad a fight had been or how stubborn I'd acted, I could come to him in times of worry, and he'd always be there, unbothered by the past. He never held a grudge, and he never made me feel like I wasn't welcome. That's the thing about fathers and sons—the relationship isn't always smooth, but there's a foundation of love that nothing can break. We had our ups and downs, sure, but in the end, that's just part of the story between a boy and his father.

A BOY AND HIS MOTHER

A Boy and His Mother

Women will cause a man much strife
 He will have girls break his heart
 But a special woman who brought him life
 Has always been there from the start

This woman holds her baby dear
 And she always believes in him
 Her love is strong and loud and clear
 Her voice is like a hymn

She knows when her son is having struggles
 She knows when to give him space
 But she's not afraid to give him cuddles
 Or place a kiss on his face

She's always there when he needs her
 Whether in person or a call
 All his pain and triumph she'll remember
 Whether big or small

A man can search high and low for loves
 But of them all there is none
 On earth or the heavens above
 That is greater than a Mother's for her son

EXPLANATION

This poem was written in honor of my momma. She has been a very important woman in my life and I wanted to give her a heartfelt acknowledgment of how she's been a constant, unwavering presence in my life, through every joy and struggle.

The opening lines symbolize the emotional journey I've experienced with women—heartbreaks, relationships that didn't work out, and the complexities that come with them. But I draw a distinction between all those fleeting connections and the deeper, more profound love of my mother, the woman who gave me life. As I was writing this I began to feel an overwhelming sense of gratitude toward her, recognizing that no matter what happens in life, she has always been there from the very beginning. I've made it quite far in my life as I become a young man I begin to realize more and more just how much she done for me.

Her love, referred to in the lines, "her love is strong, loud, and clear— are qualities I've felt throughout my life. It's as if I can hear her voice, soothing and reassuring like a hymn, a constant source of comfort even in the most difficult moments. The idea that she can sense when I'm struggling—without me even needing to say a word—is so true, and it makes me reflect on those moments when she gave me space to figure things out, yet was always nearby if I needed her support.

The warmth of her touch is a memory that sticks with me—how she never hesitated to offer affection, even when I pretended I didn't need it. Because as a cowboy I have always told myself not to show emotion because it shows weakness, but she has shown me vulnerability is okay. In moments of sadness, frustration, or triumph, she's been there to hold me, kiss my face, or simply listen whether it is in person or a phone call 8 hours away.

As I get older, I realize how much she's been a witness to literally my entire life. She remembers every small victory, every moment of pain, even things I myself may have forgotten. Her memory of my life feels like a deep well of shared experience, one that binds us together in a way no one else can replicate. The closing lines hit home with the idea that no love compares to a mother's love for her son. It's a love that transcends all others, and it gives me a sense of comfort and security. Even though life brings new relationships and love in various forms, the bond I have with my mother is unlike any other—a timeless, unwavering, and unconditional connection.

COWBOY

Cowboy

There's a certain kind of man
 With a special mentality
 Of civilization, he's no fan
 He understands mortality

He keeps to his horses rather than men
 and prefers the open-range
 You can find him reminiscing about way back when
 Many folks may say he is strange

But he doesn't care how he's perceived
 He just sticks to his ways
 In his values, he's always believed
 And will till his very last days

He does his best to stay away from the cork
 And continues to ride for the brand
 He takes pride in his hard-work
 And keeps the bible in hand

EXPLANATION

When I wrote this poem, I wanted to capture the essence of a cowboy's mindset—the way he sees the world, the land, and his role in it. To me, there's a raw, untamed spirit in certain men who live by the code of the West. They're not drawn to the conveniences or trappings of civilization; instead, they understand the fleeting nature of life, aware of their mortality in a way that others might not be.

I modeled this cowboy after myself because my whole life I feel I have been misunderstood and that used to bother me. But as I get older my beliefs and values get firmer and I take pride in who I am and identify as. I wanted to capture a man who feels more at home with his horse than with other people, finding peace in the open range and the solitude it offers. He carries a deep respect for tradition, reminiscing about the old ways, even if people don't understand him which stems from my belief that I was born in the wrong generations but I try to model myself after the traditions that I read so much about and put into practice every day. His life, to outsiders, may seem strange or even outdated, but this cowboy doesn't let that bother him. He has a quiet confidence, rooted in the values that have guided him all his life.

He holds fast to his principles by sticking to his "ways" with unwavering commitment, knowing that they're what give him purpose and meaning. Even as others may stray or take shortcuts, he remains grounded in his belief system. There's something timeless about that, and I model my own integrity after it.

The line about avoiding "the cork" stem from me not being a drinker. I never have really liked alcohol or other temptations, I never saw the point in them because they only bring temporary joy. The glory of God brings abundant joy that is everlasting. So this line is a nod to how cowboys often resist the temptations of vice, like alcohol. It shows a sense of discipline and self-control. But more importantly, he's someone who rides for the brand, taking pride in his hard work, loyalty, and devotion to his ranch or employer. His life is one of purpose, simplicity, and a quiet faith, symbolized by the Bible in his hand.

This cowboy to me is more than just a figure of the past; he represents an enduring set of values—hard work, faith, and loyalty—that I admire and live out every day. Those traits are what set him apart, making him a special kind of man, one who lives by a code that will guide him to his last breath.

BROKEN-HEARTED COWBOY

Broken-Hearted Cowboy

There's a man who seldom speaks
He often drifts alone
A good woman is what he seeks
But his emotions are hardly shown

The ladies are all in love with him
But he seldom pays attention
He simply gives 'em a little grin
Cuz He knows they only bring Tension

He often remembers the one he loved
Back in his younger years
His pain and strife she always numbed
Now her memory brings him tears

In women, he's seemed to have lost all hope
His heart just isn't healed
So he strikes out for open range at a lope
His emotions he keeps sealed

But there are times when he'll share
Not to any man but his to his horse
Cause the weight even he cannot bear
For trusting her he feels remorse

He tries to keep on moving forward
Wanting to forget
But just can't help but feel cornered
Every woman he sees as a threat

But he keeps his faith in the lord
And trusts he'll find the one
His heart will finally be restored
And the damage be undone

One day he'll have a fresh start
And hopefully, find some joy
He'll once again open his heart
This broken-hearted cowboy

EXPLANATION

I wrote this poem after talking to a woman that ended rather poorly for me. Though I don't show much emotion outwardly, there's a part of me that comes that remembers the pain of trusting that person with my feelings. I let myself be vulnerable for the first time in my life with her and it made me scared to be vulnerable with anyone else. People may not realize it, but I've built walls around myself, keeping others at a distance, especially women, because of that loss.

So I wrote this poem using a quiet mysterious man based on myself. In the beginning, you see his loneliness—he's searching for something, perhaps love, but he keeps his emotions tightly guarded. He's a man of few words, and though women are drawn to him, he's distant, offering only a small smile. It's not that he doesn't notice their interest, but he's been through too much to let himself be pulled into something that could reopen old wounds. The memory of the woman he loved long ago still holds power over him, and even though she once brought him comfort, now her memory only brings sadness. His heartache hasn't healed.

His withdrawal from women isn't because he doesn't care; it's because he's afraid of being hurt again. He's built walls around himself, and the only place he feels safe is out on the open range, away from people. The lonesome freedom of the prairie mirrors his emotional isolation. But even in that isolation, the weight of his past catches up with him. There are moments when it's too much to bear, and in those times, the only one he shares his pain with is his horse. There's something raw and powerful in that image—him leaning on his trusted companion, knowing that no man could understand what he's going through.

Though he rides hard, trying to move forward, there's a sense of being stuck, cornered by the fear of being hurt again. He's closed off, and every woman feels like a potential threat to his fragile heart. But despite all this, he hasn't lost faith. He trusts in God, holding onto the hope that one day he'll heal, that his broken heart will be restored. There's a quiet resilience in this cowboy, a belief that maybe, somewhere down the road, there will be a fresh start for him.

The poem ends with hope—a longing for joy, for the possibility that one day he'll find someone who can break through his walls and help him open his heart again. The cowboy may be broken-hearted now, but deep down, he still believes in love, even if it seems out of reach for the moment. There's something tragic and beautiful in that belief, a testament to his strength and vulnerability all at once.



I WROTE IT ONE DAY WHILE SITTING IN A CLASS FOR
AN ENTREPRENEURIAL PROGRAM NAMED AFTER AN
OLD COWBOY BY THE NAME OF PAUL F ENGLER. I
COULDN'T REALLY TELL YOU WHAT MADE ME DO IT,
BUT I OPENED UP MY COMPUTER AND PULLED UP MY
NOTES TAB. AN HOUR AND THREE CUPS OF COFFEE
GO BY AND I HAVE MYSELF A POEM.