

PECOS BILL

FROM TEXAS

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CHARACTERS

The Pecos Bill stories feature different characters, along with Bill himself.

PROTAGONIST: Pecos Bill.

Texas native, raised by coyotes, had
Dozens of wives, and was an amazing
cowboy.

Other Characters:

- Bill's mom
- Bill's Big Brother
- Mama coyote (that raised Bill)
- Slue-foot Sue (Bill's one true love)
- Old trapper
- Tornado (That Bill rode)
- Rattlesnake
- Cougar
- Former boss of "bad men"

SETTING

The story of Pecos Bill started in the 1830s during America's Westward Expansion. It starts off in the flat plains of East Texas.

LOCATIONS MENTIONED:

- TEXAS (where most of the story takes place)
- KANSAS
- NEW MEXICO
- GRAND CANYON (ARIZONA)
- DEATH VALLEY (CALIFORNIA)

SUMMARY OF THE STORY

Ya see, Pecos Bill was quite a fella who was born with great skills, demonstrating them early on. Unfortunately he was abandoned by his family and left to be raised by a pack of coyotes. But eventually he is found by his brother, who teaches him to be a good cowboy. And he would be one of the greatest cowboys, if not the best, in the west. He would go all around the west being a great cowboy doing great cowboy things.

Rising Action: Bill is taken by coyotes and raised by them for 15 years. Causing his mom to die due to a broken heart.

Climax: Bill's brother finds him and chastises him.

Falling Action: Bill's brother teaches him to be a cowboy out in the west.

Exposition: Bill is born into the world and demonstrates amazing intelligence.

Conflict: Pecos Bill is raised by coyotes, making him behave wildly.

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Mood of the Story: Adventurous

Example from the text: “Seems they took the wagons over the Pecos River while Pecos Bill was taking a nap and he got bounced out of the back and swept downstream afore anyone missed him. If he hadn't taught himself to swim right-quick, he would have been a goner!”

Example from the text “Well now, Texas jest became too tame for Pecos Bill once he killed off all the bad men, so he struck out for New Mexico, looking for a hard outfit.

Example from the text: “Yep, it was that time he was up Kansas way and decided to ride him a tornado.”

Author's Tone: Animated

Examples from the text: “He started talkin' before he was a month old, did his teething on his Pa's bowie knife and rode his first horse jest as soon as he learned to sit up on his own. “

Examples from the text: “Now everyone in the West knows that Pecos Bill could ride anything. No bronco could throw him, no sir!”

Examples from the text: “Now Bill wasn't gonna ride jest any tornado, no ma'am. He waited for the biggest gol-durned tornado you ever saw. It was turning the sky black and green, and roaring so loud it woke up the farmers away over in China.”

Finding the Theme of Pecos Bill

A lesson learned by a character:

In the story “Pecos Bill and Slue-foot Sue”, Bill lets Sue ride his strong horse, Widow-maker. He tried to stop her, but she insisted on it and he let her anyway, because of his love for her. She ends up getting thrown to the moon, and with a spring on her back, kept bouncing back up. He ended up having to shoot her because she never stopped bouncing. He learned that he needed to assert himself against someone else’s wants, so he can prevent bad things like that from happening.

How did they grow and change?

Bill went through more wives and learned to move on from what happened with Sue, even if she was his true love. He stayed strong as a rootin’ and tootin’ cowboy, and didn’t let her death bring him down.

Why did the characters act the way they acted?

Sue acted this way because she wanted to ride Widow-maker. She was driven by what she wanted, and wouldn’t listen to Bill when he tried to stop her. Bill let her ride the horse because he couldn’t stand up against his true love riding his horse, and because him letting her ride it was “to prove how much he loved her”.

What’s different at the end of the story?

Bill stopping mourning over her, and eventually got married again to another woman. Slue-foot Sue’s death continued to be a saddening event in his mind.

What stays with you or the message you can take away from the story?

The message that we can get from this story is to stand up for ourselves to get control of a situation. Bill got forced into letting Sue ride his horse, and it ended in the death of his first wife.

Tall Tale Elements found in Pecos Bill

- **A Superhuman Man, who is very strong.**

"When he started to crawl, Pecos Bill would slither out of the wagon while his Mama was cookin' supper and wrestle with the bear cubs and other wild animals that roamed the prairies."

Alongside Pecos Bill's unusual feats as a newborn, he would fight with bear cubs as a toddler.

- **The claim or belief that the story "really happened"**

"That tornado was down to practically nothing when Bill finally fell off. He hit the ground so hard it sank below sea level. Folks call the spot Death Valley."

In this part of the story, it claims that Bill falls down from the sky and onto the ground, creating Death Valley.

Thank you for listening to

PECOS BILL

(from Texas)