

# Pecos Bill Tames a Rough Bunch

A Reading A-Z Shared Reading Book

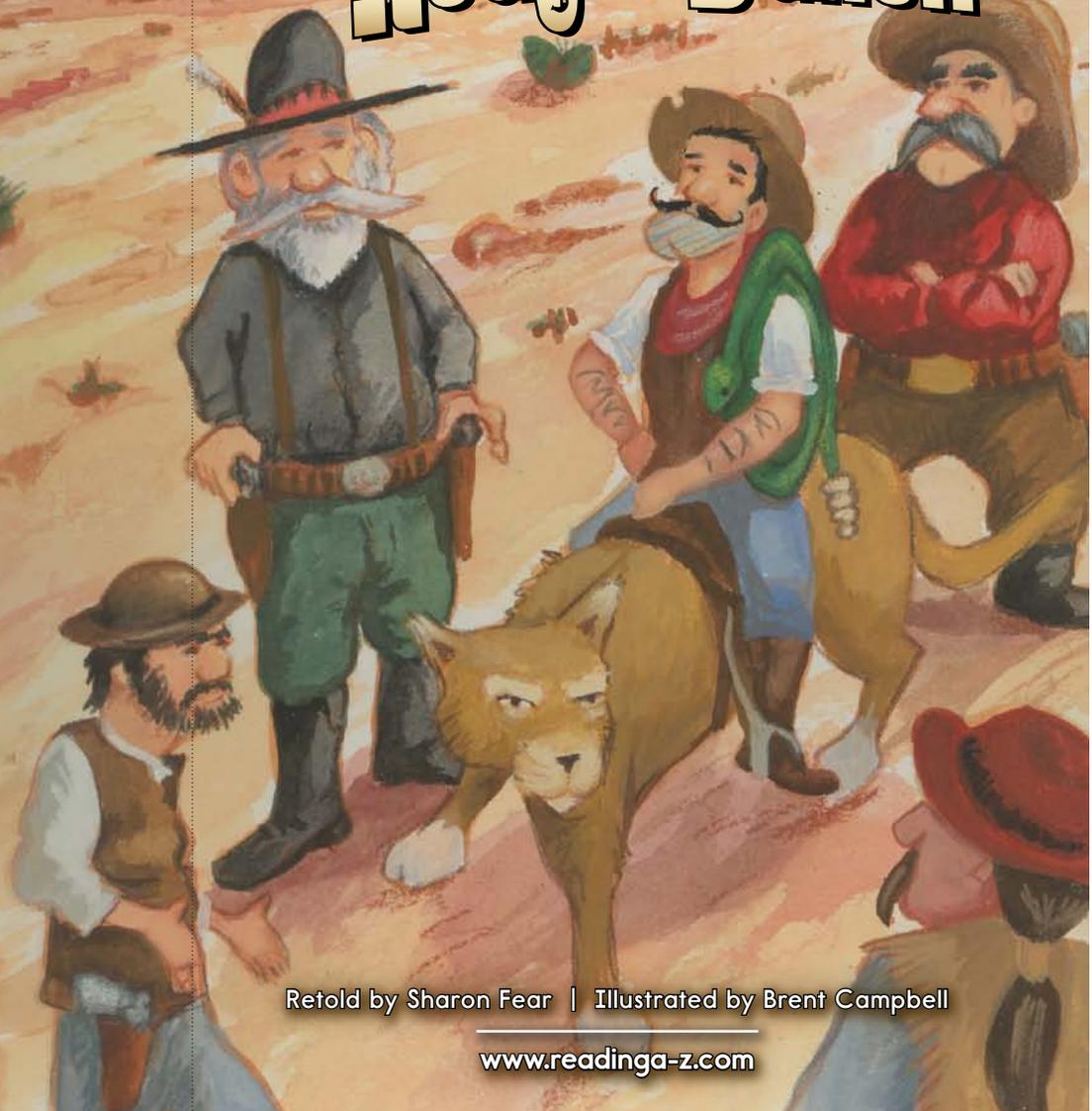
Word Count: 831



## Home Connection: Adverbs

Your reader is learning that adverbs describe how, how much, and when. As you read together, identify the adverbs in the story. Then make a list of several adverbs that describe *how* his or her favorite animal walks, runs, swims, flies, or climbs. Have your reader bring the list of the adverbs to school to share in class.

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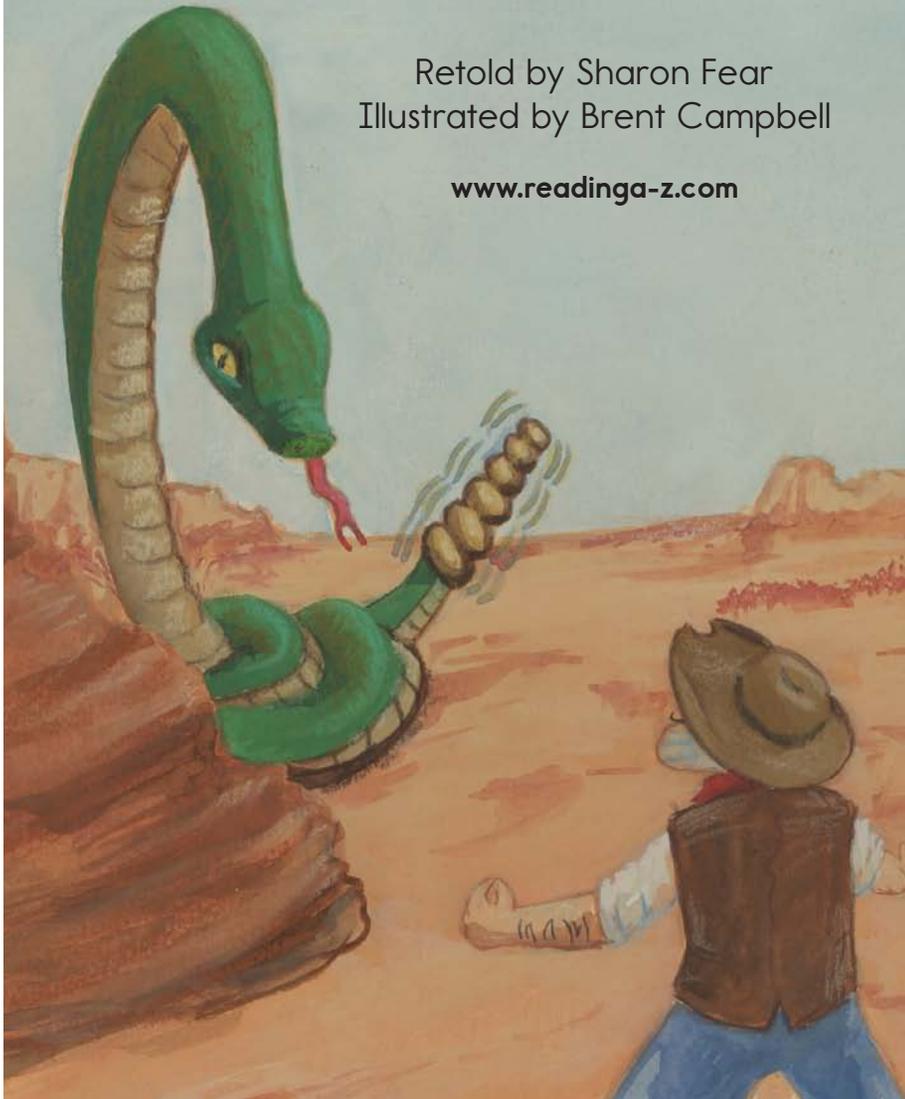
Retold by Sharon Fear | Illustrated by Brent Campbell

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Shared Reading Book  
Level 3  
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One day a teensy weensy boy  
landed in Texas.

He was bumped off his  
parents' wagon as it crossed  
the Pecos River.

Well, guess what? That teensy weensy  
boy grew up to be the roughest,  
toughest cowboy in Texas, Pecos Bill.

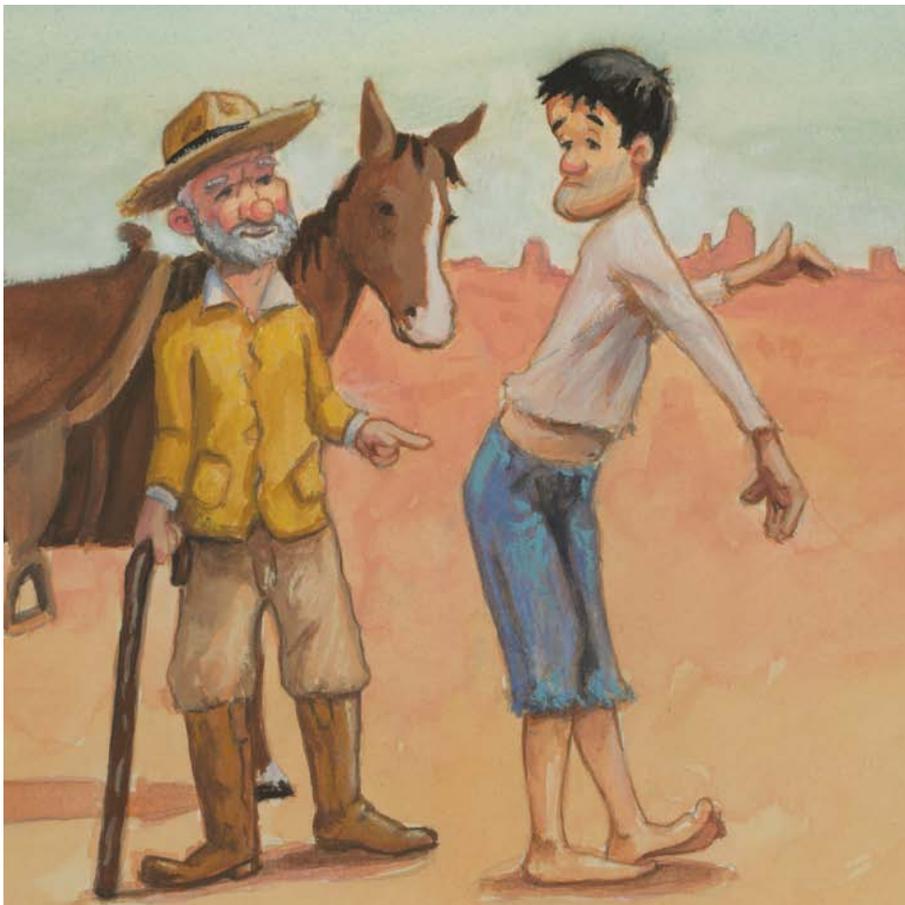
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Left behind and lost, little Bill had some  
luck that day. A pack of Texas coyotes  
found him.

Those kindly coyotes took him in and  
raised him up.

They treated him just  
like one of their own.  
In fact, Bill thought he  
was a coyote!

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Then another kindly Texan, a man this time, pointed out that Bill was not a coyote.

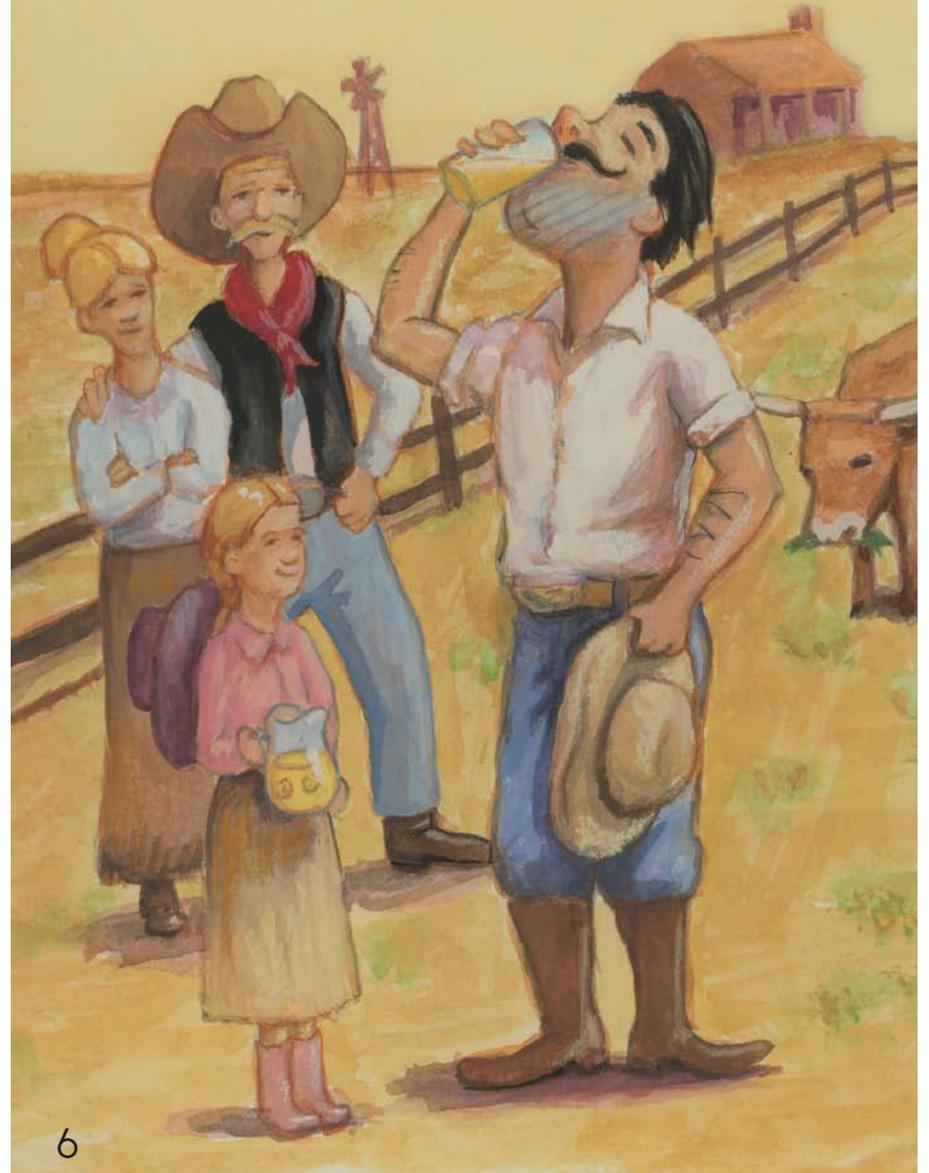
“You got no tail, son,” the man said.

Bill looked behind him. It was true!

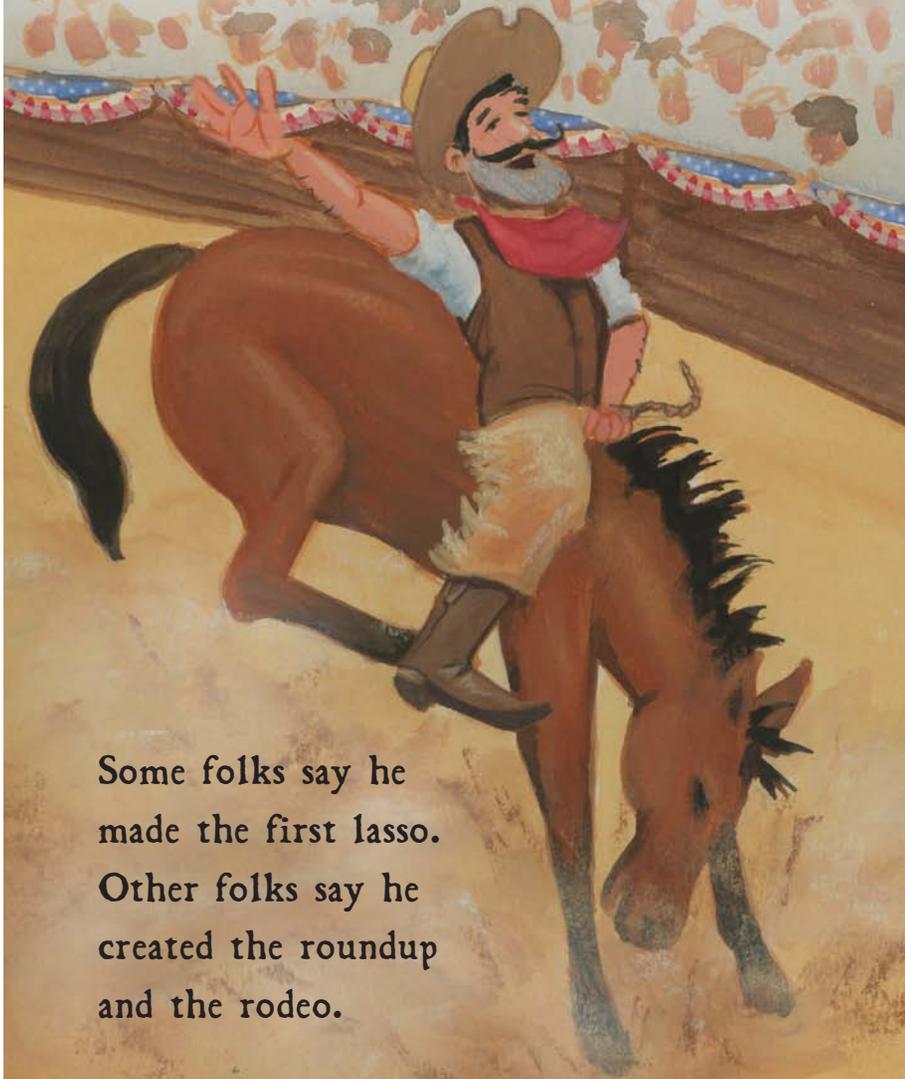
From then on, Bill started acting more or less human. He put on shoes.

He stopped howling at the moon.

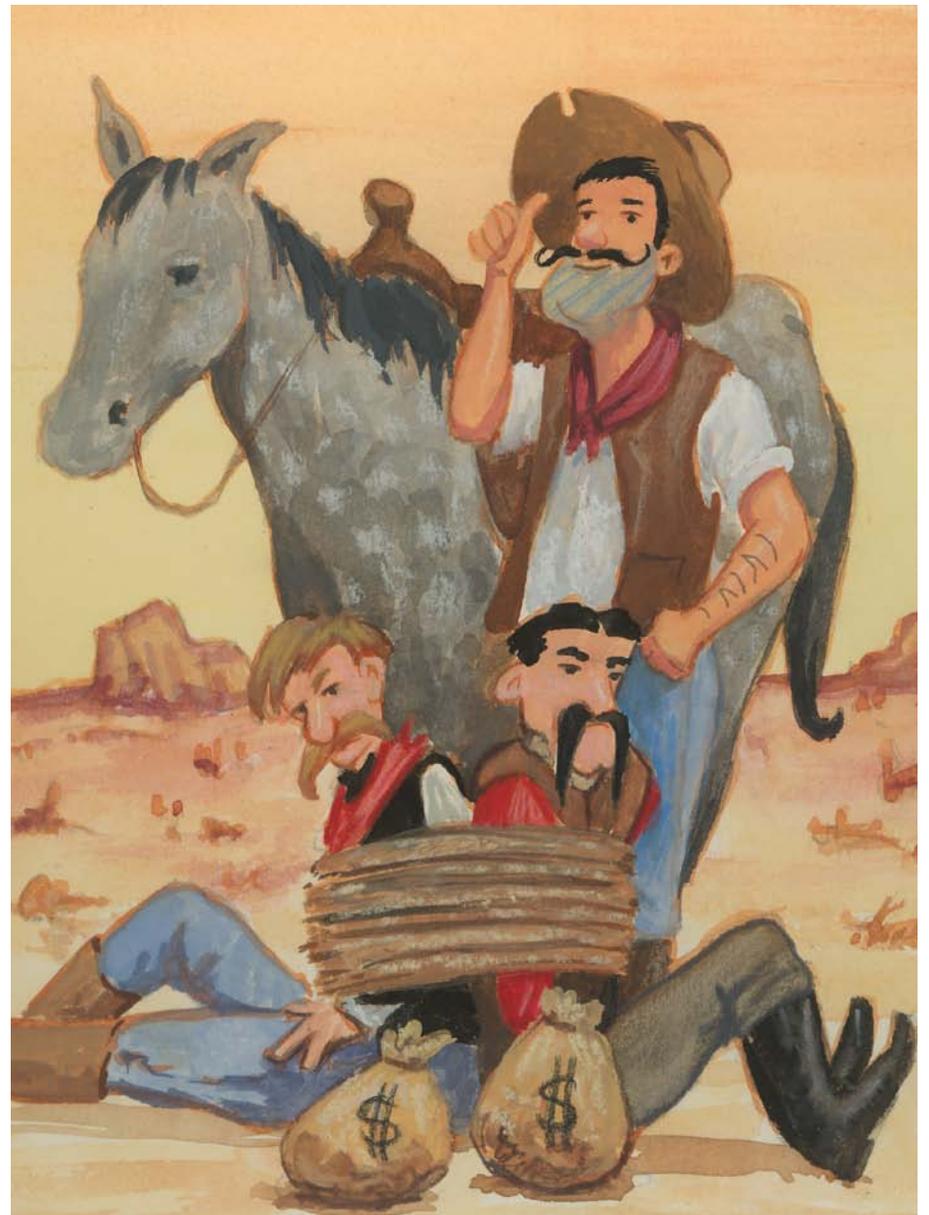
Bill started working on ranches, where he got acquainted with many friendly humans. In fact, Texans were so kind to Bill that he decided to pay them back.



First, he invented the cowboy life. He showed Texans how to jump on a wild horse. He showed them how to ride it, bucking and twisting, until it became a friend for life.



Some folks say he made the first lasso. Other folks say he created the roundup and the rodeo.



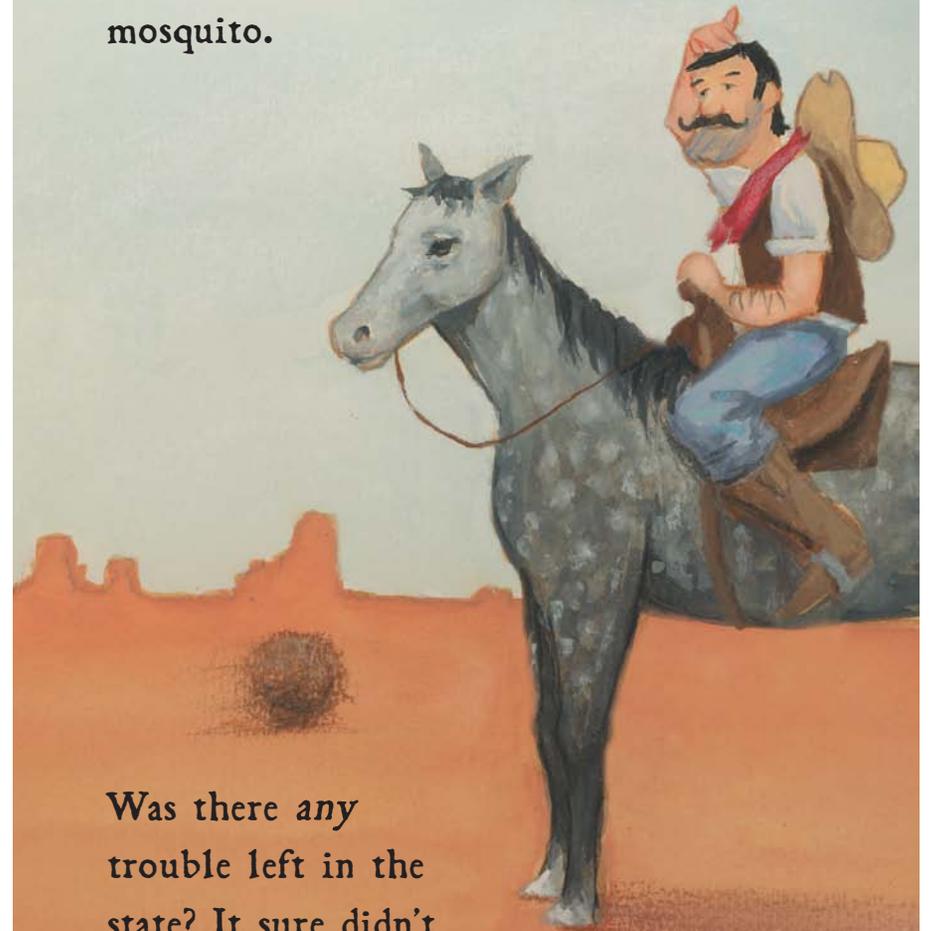
Then Bill started rounding up bad men and running them off. Before long, there was hardly an outlaw left in the state.

When tornadoes came roaring into Texas from Oklahoma and Kansas, Bill just jumped on and rode them right into the ground. There they lay, whimpering little puffs of wind.

**“And stay down!”** Bill would say.



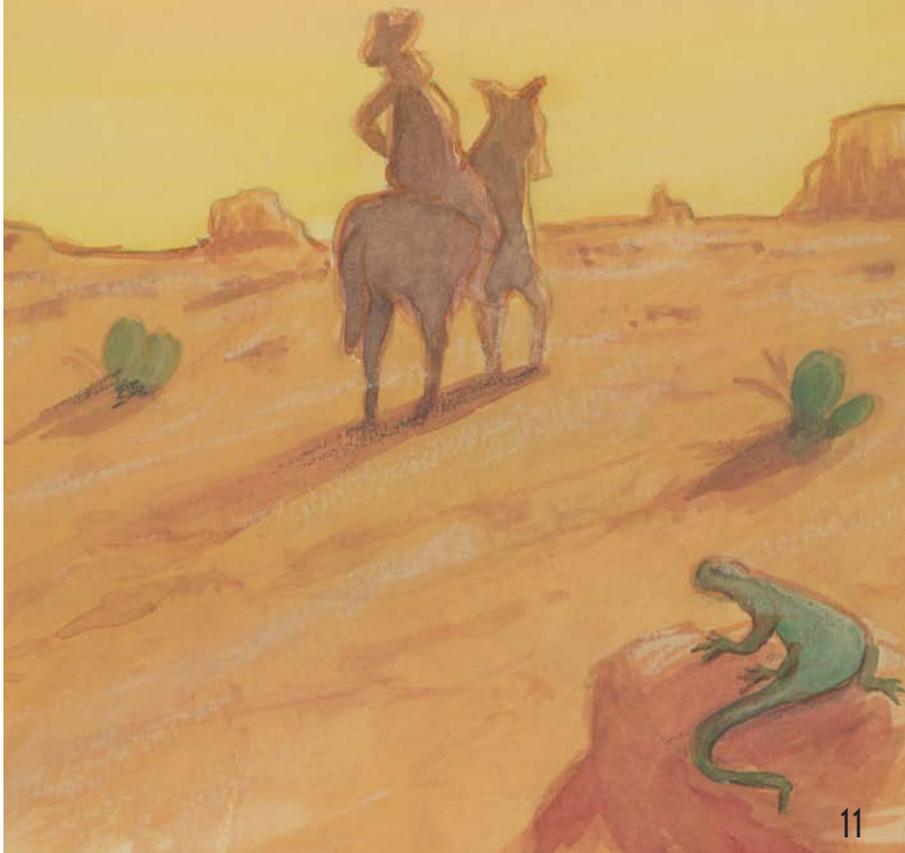
One day Bill looked out over Texas and something felt wrong. There was not an outlaw or a tornado in sight. Not even a bloodthirsty mosquito.



Was there *any* trouble left in the state? It sure didn't seem like it. That was the problem. Texas was just too tame for the untamed likes of Pecos Bill.

*"I hate to leave Texas," Bill thought, "but I need something to do. I'll push on west and set up a brand new ranch."*

Bill rode out of Texas. He didn't know a single soul this far west, but he did know he needed cowhands to help him build a new ranch.



Bill started asking around. "I want men as untamed as I am," he said. "I want 'em rough and tough, unwashed and impolite! I want men who can ride all day and . . ."

"Whoa!" said an old-timer. "That sounds like the rough bunch camped up in that canyon. Folks say they eat nails for breakfast."

"Sounds like the men for me," said Bill. Off he rode, into the canyon.

Bill hadn't gone far when his horse got spooked.

He bucked off Bill *and* his saddle and hightailed it into the dusty distance.

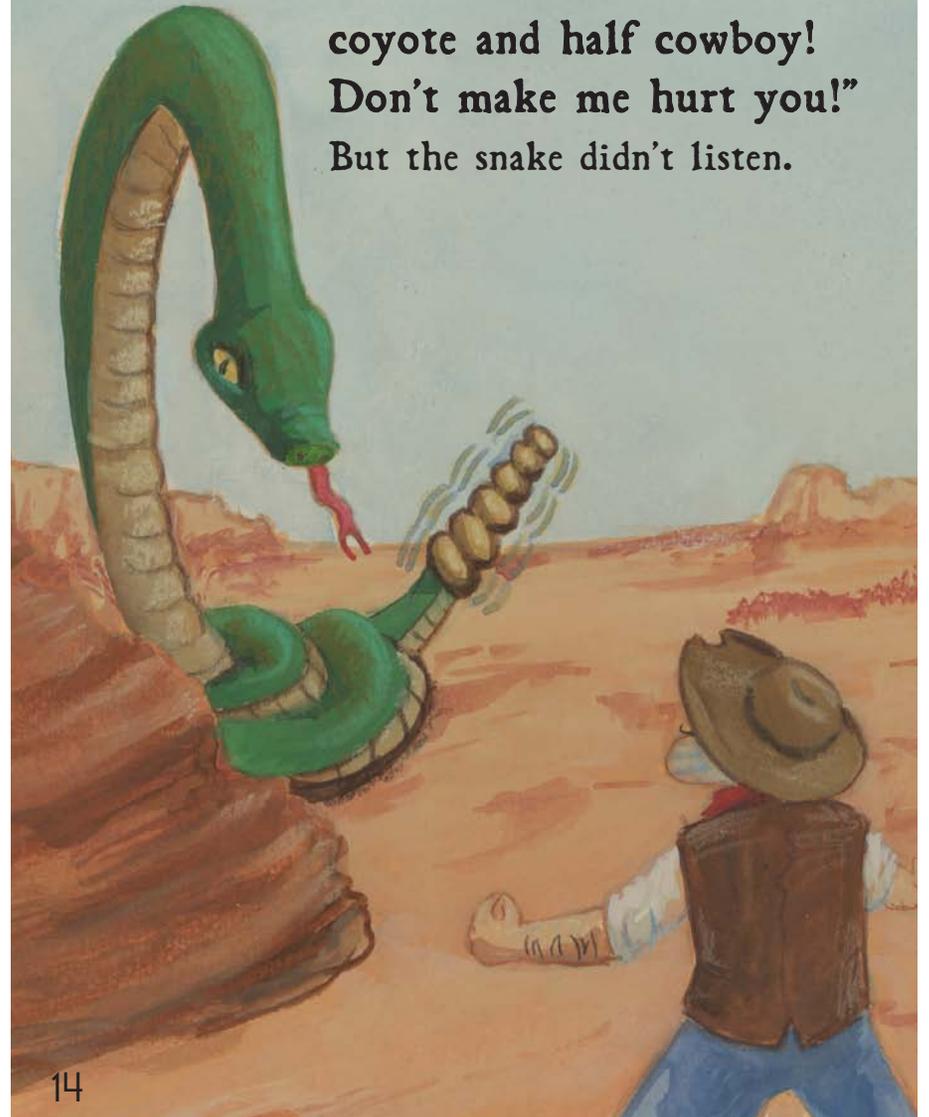


Well, Bill was stunned! He had never been thrown before in his life. Something had terrified his old friend. What was it?

Just then, a rattlesnake of *unbelievable* size rose up in Bill's path. It flicked its forked tongue.

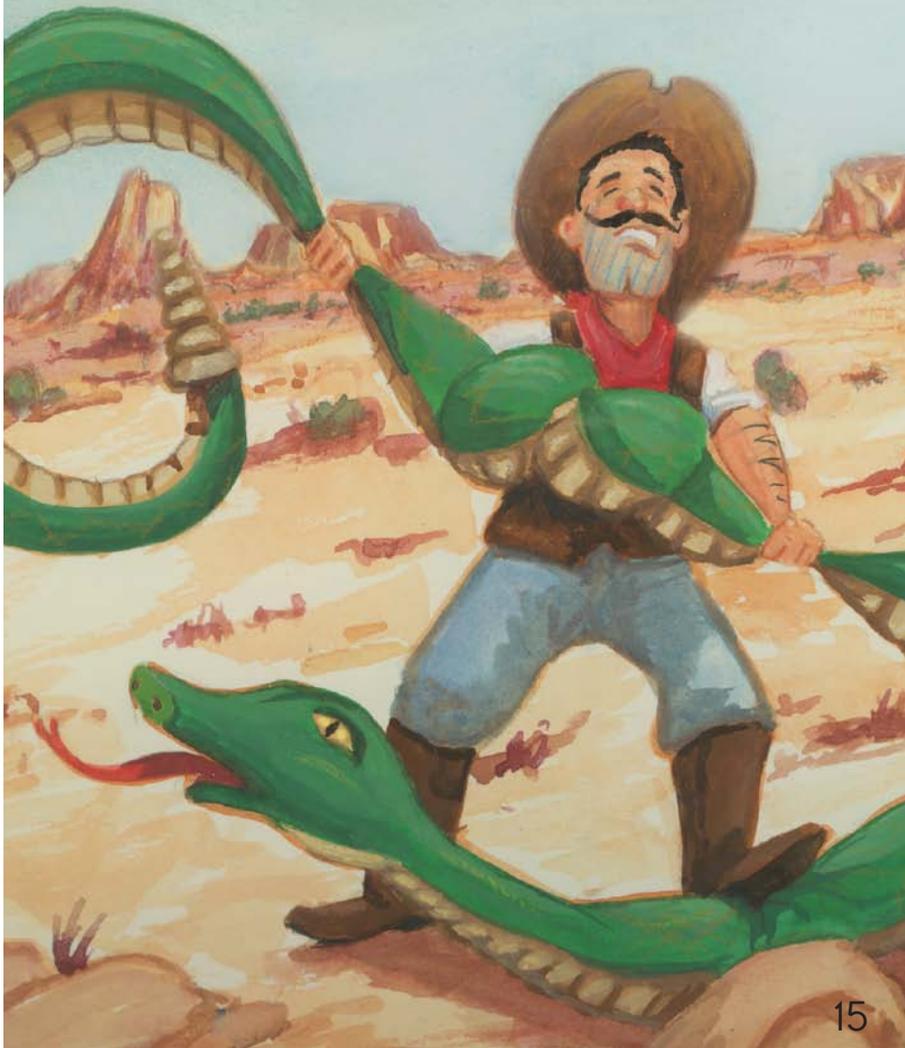
It showed its giant fangs. "Stop!" cried Bill.

"I'm Pecos Bill. I'm half coyote and half cowboy! Don't make me hurt you!"  
But the snake didn't listen.



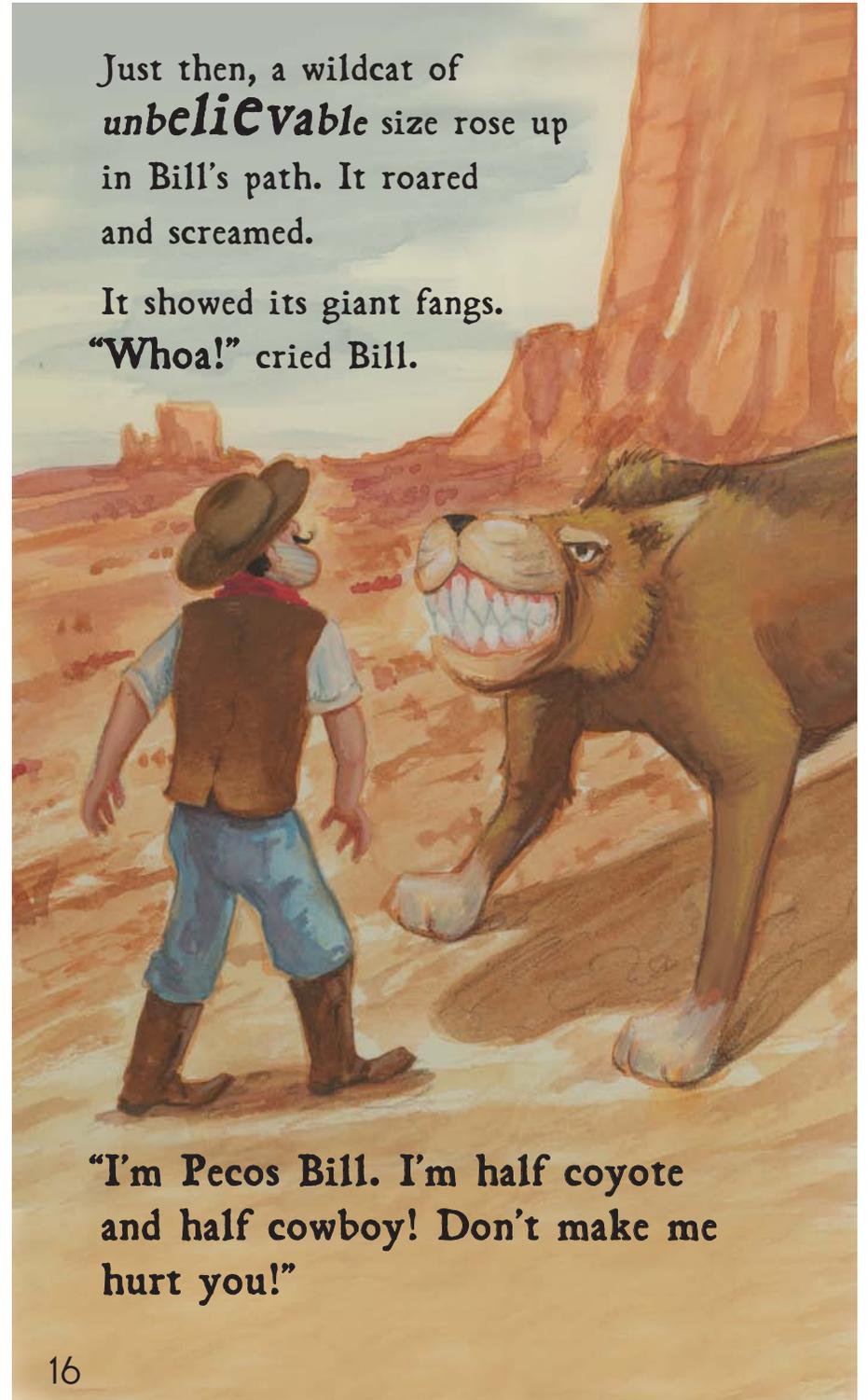
Now, Bill was always fair, so he let the snake have the first bite. Then he wrestled it to the ground and tied it in knots.

“I need a new bullwhip,” Bill said, “and you are it.”



Just then, a wildcat of *unbelievable* size rose up in Bill's path. It roared and screamed.

It showed its giant fangs. “Whoa!” cried Bill.



“I'm Pecos Bill. I'm half coyote and half cowboy! Don't make me hurt you!”

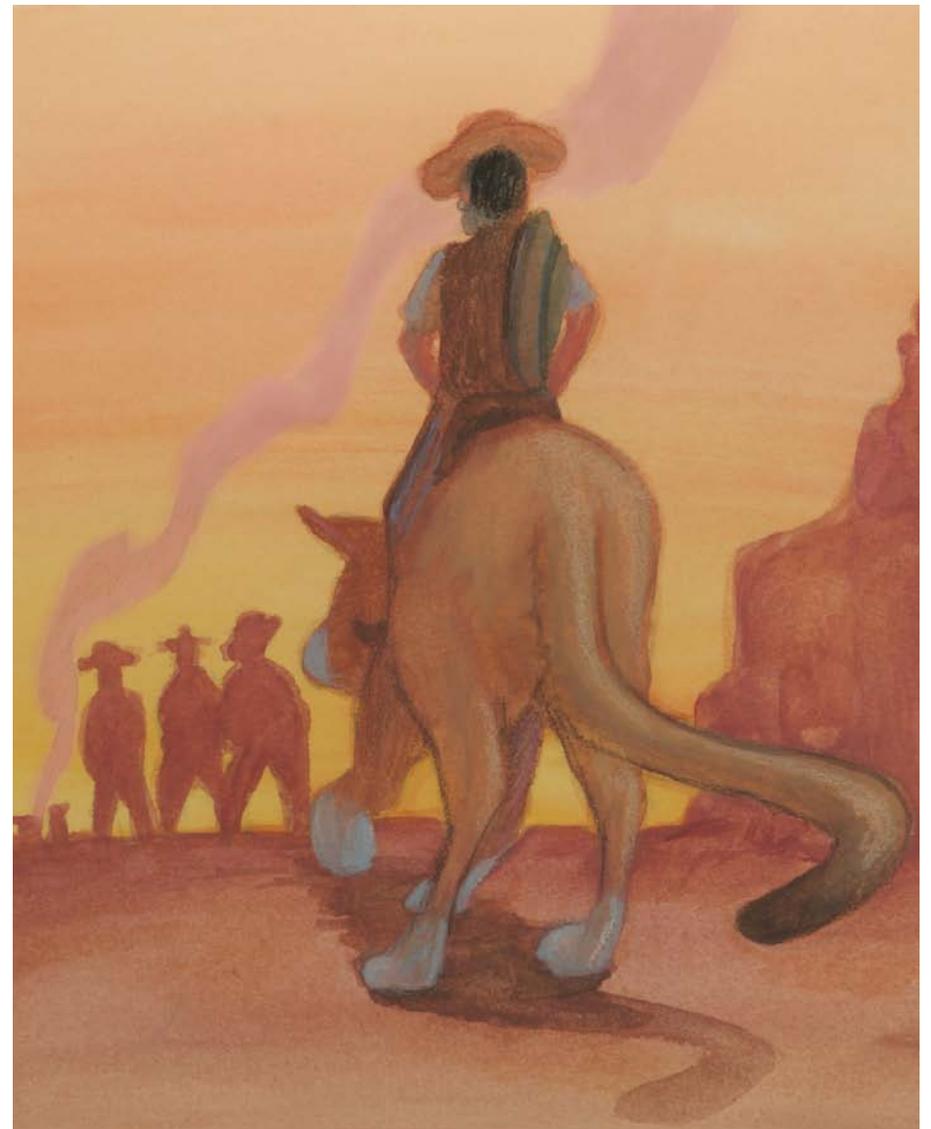
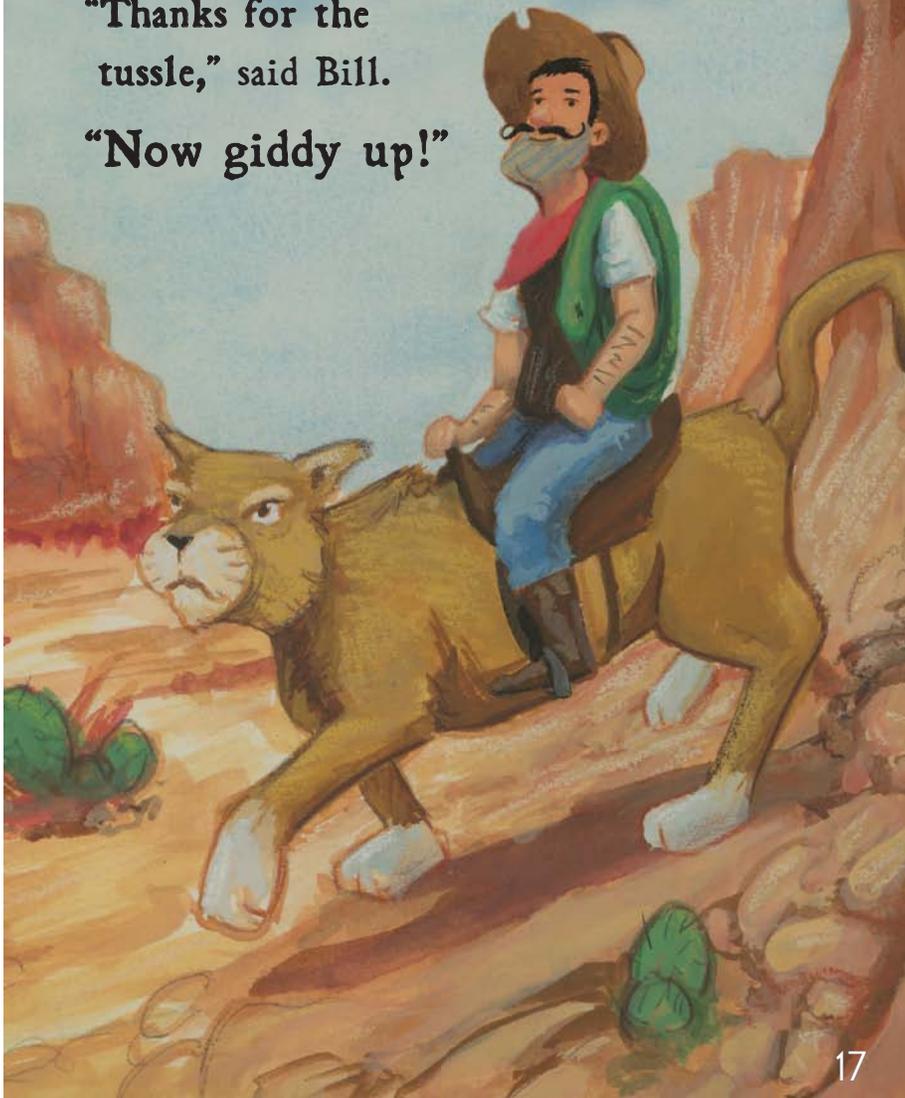
Then Bill had a thought. He needed a ride.

He threw his saddle on the big cat's back.

He rode it bucking and screaming  
until it was soaked with sweat and  
meek as a kitty cat.

“Thanks for the  
tussle,” said Bill.

“Now giddy up!”



Bill rode on until he saw some men  
around a campfire. They were as big as  
grizzlies and twice as hairy. They were  
boiling up beans and coffee.

**“Howdy, boys,”** said Bill, all friendly-like.  
**“How about sharing your grub with a hungry cowboy?”**

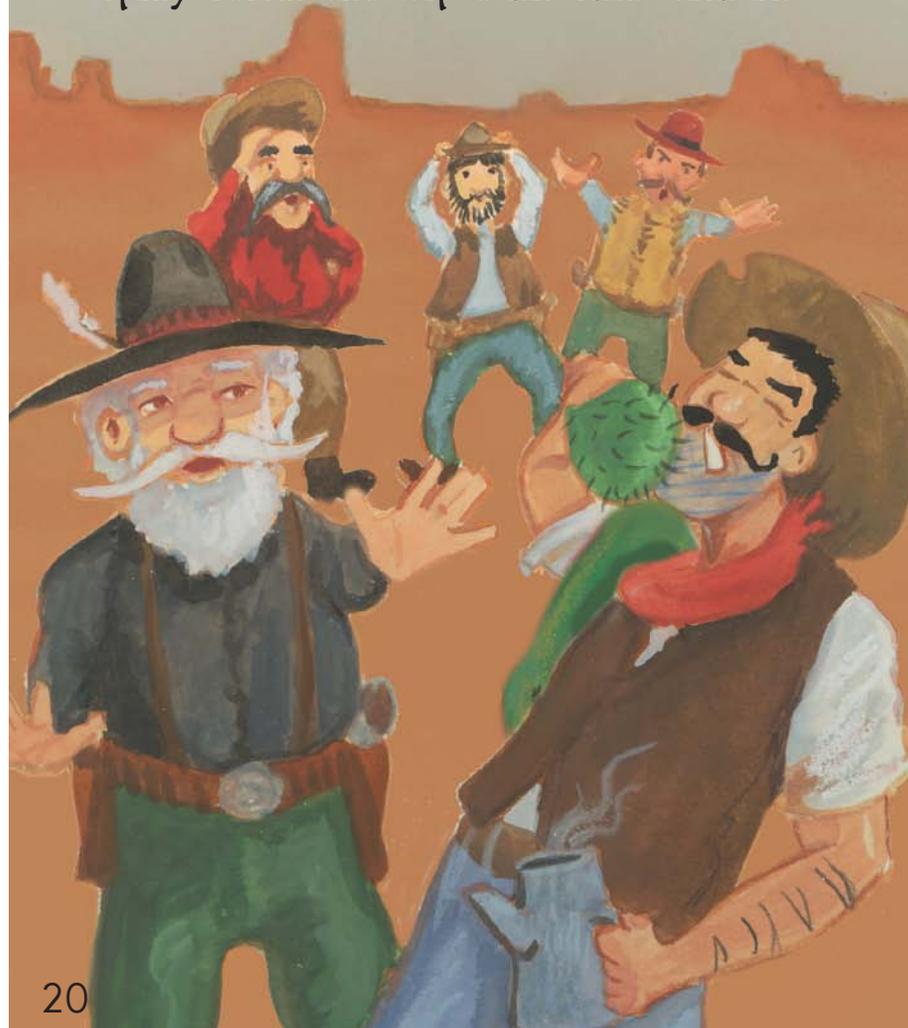


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Bill reached bare-handed into the boiling pot.

He grabbed some beans and swallowed them.

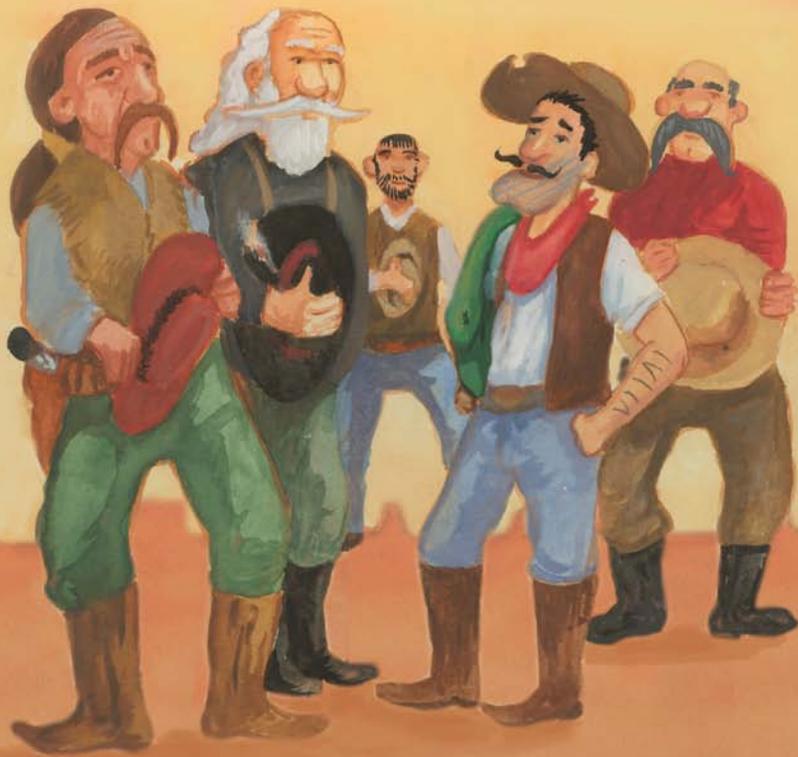
He tipped up the coffee pot and gulped down the boiling brew. Then he picked a spiny cactus and wiped his chin with it.



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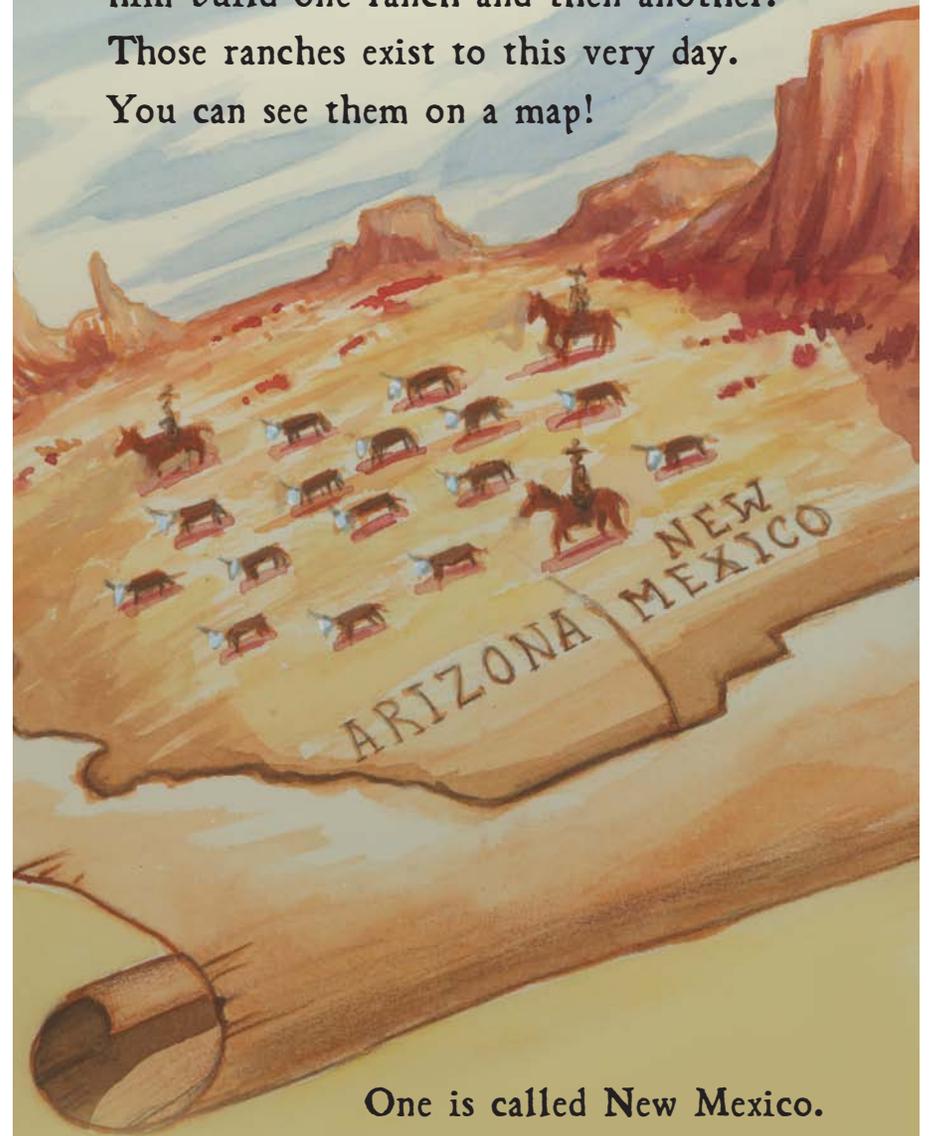
**“Now, boys,”** said Bill. **“Who’s the boss around here?”**

The boys took a long look at the man who rode a wildcat, cracked a rattlesnake whip, downed boiling hot grub, and used a cactus for a napkin.



They whipped off their hats.  
**“You are!”** they cried.

From then on, that rough bunch followed Bill like puppies. They helped him build one ranch and then another. Those ranches exist to this very day. You can see them on a map!



One is called New Mexico.  
The other is called Arizona.