

# **Wild Pecos Bill**

## **Wild Tales of a Wild Texan**

By R. Eugene Jackson

### **Performance Rights**

To copy this text is an infringement of the federal copyright law as is to perform this play without royalty payment. All rights are controlled by Eldridge Publishing Co. Inc. Contact the publisher for further scripts and licensing information.

On all programs and advertising the author's name must appear as well as this notice: "Produced by special arrangement with Eldridge Publishing Company."

**PUBLISHED BY  
ELDRIDGE PUBLISHING COMPANY INC.**

[www.histage.com](http://www.histage.com)

© 1995 by *Eldridge Publishing Company*

Download your complete script from Eldridge Publishing

<https://histage.com/wild-pecos-bill>

### **STORY OF PLAY**

It's the rootin'-tootin', ropin' and shootin' Wild, Wild West, and Pecos Bill learns how to be a low-down dirty cowpoke. But when he sees Sweet Sue ridin' her buckin' catfish, he falls head over spurs for her and even takes an hour or so to dig a ditch (*which he later calls the Pecos River.*) from north Texas to the Rio Grande so that her catfish can have a decent stream for swimming.

Determined to win her as his furever sweetheart, Bill follows her dusty trail. First, though, he rids the town of Pecos of all its outlaws, tames some purty wild desert creatures, and rescues his Sweet Sue from a couple of mean hombres called Buck and Chuck.

The play is written in Story Theatre style so that little or no scenery is required and characters may double roles no matter the gender. Percussion instruments and a "geetar" may accompany the action.

TIME: The late 1800s.

PLACE: There is one acting space which represents several locales at different times with the addition of small scenic pieces, such as a cactus or a campfire.

**CAST OF CHARACTERS**

*(Five to eighteen actor/actresses play the following parts:)*

Percussionist  
Folk Singer *(If desired.)*  
Narrator  
Wild Pecos Bill  
His Ma  
His Pa  
Coyotes  
Cowpoke  
Sweet Sue *(Slue-Foot Sue in the original.)*  
Bowlegged Bob  
Tex Mex  
Tom  
The Old Timer  
Cougar  
Chuck  
Buck  
Gabriel  
St. Peter

\*With the exception of the character of Wild Pecos Bill, all roles may be doubled and, in the style of Story Theatre, any role may be played by either a male or female.

## **SYNOPSIS OF THE PLAY**

*(Although there are no breaks in the stage action, the general scenes are as follows:)*

**SCENE 1** - How Pecos Was Raised by Coyotes

**SCENE 2** - How Pecos Learned He Was a Man

**SCENE 3** - How Pecos Fell in Love

**SCENE 4** - How Pecos Cleaned Up the Town of Pecos

**SCENE 5** - How Pecos Tamed the Wild Creatures

**SCENE 6** - How Pecos Rescued Sweet Sue

## **PRODUCTION NOTES**

All the scenes may be played before a single, neutral, Western setting, while the actors are dressed in sneakers, jeans, and Western shirts to which small prop pieces are added to help suggest each character. More elaborate scenery and costumes are possible at the discretion of the director. At the side and visible to the audience are several percussion instruments, such as cymbals, a bass drum, castanets, woodblocks, a slide whistle, etc., that are used to give background sounds or to accent stage actions. These sounds are made when indicated in the script, or at any other appropriate place as determined by the director. A folksinger with a guitar may provide additional background music or musical interludes between the stories. The actors play the roles of cowboys and wild animals—chasing, racing and bucking. They cheer, scream and yell. Percussion provides miscellaneous sounds to accompany the rodeo.

**See end of play for list of props.**

## **WILD PECOS BILL**

*(AT RISE: The ACTORS enter dressed as cowboys. They play the roles of cowboys and wild animals—chasing, racing, and bucking. They cheer, scream and yell. The NARRATOR steps forward to quiet everyone.)*

NARRATOR: All right, cowpokes. The rodeo's over. Time to hang up your spurs and bridles. Settle down those broncos now. Settle down. *(NO ONE pays any attention to HIM.)* I said, tie those horses up and button up your lips. *(THEY don't listen. HE pulls his obviously fake pistol.)* If I don't get silence in two seconds, I'm going to put a hole through something important. *(THEY are still yelling.)* One second. Two seconds. You had your warning.

*(HE fires toward ACTOR ONE. PERCUSSIONIST: Rim shot makes the sound. The actor's hat flies off. [NOTE: A string tied to his hat is pulled by a person standing behind him.] ALL are suddenly silent and stare at the NARRATOR.)*

NARRATOR: *(Cont.)* That's better. I want all you cowpokes to gather around because I have a few lies to tell.

ACTOR TWO: Lies? We don't want to hear any lies.

NARRATOR: *(Points HIS pistol at ACTOR TWO.)* And I say you do.

ACTOR TWO: We do, we do.

NARRATOR: Anyway, these stories are about that famous West Texas boy, Wild Pecos Bill—and all stories about him are lies.

ACTOR THREE: But why do we want to hear lies?

NARRATOR: To learn about the wild, Wild West. Even if what you learn isn't true.

*(The ACTORS boo HIM/HER. PERCUSSIONIST responds.)*

*Wild Pecos Bill*

-6-

NARRATOR: *(Cont.)* All right, all right. You're right, of course. Why learn it if it isn't true?

ACTORS: *(Ad-lib.)* Why? Why?

NARRATOR: If you'll hush up, I'll tell you why. *(PERCUSSIONIST cymbal crash.)* A long time ago in West Texas, cowboys sat around campfires after dinner and sang songs to the music of a guitar or harmonica and told stories to each other. Many of the stories were tall tales—lies, in fact. Why did they do it? To pass the time, to socialize, to amuse themselves, to see who could tell the biggest whopper. And tales about Wild Pecos Bill contain some of the biggest whoppers of all time.

ACTORS: *(Ad-lib.)* Well, tell us. Tell us a story about Wild Pecos Bill. We want to hear a story. Let's hear it. *(In unison.)* Tell us some lies!

*(PERCUSSIONIST accent.)*

NARRATOR: I thought you'd never ask. But I'll need your help. Each of you can be a character in my story. Pick out a costume piece that fits your part—and let's get started.

*(The ACTORS rush to a box or a rack of costumes and pick out costume pieces appropriate to their characters as the NARRATOR describes the scene.)*

NARRATOR: *(Cont.)* The place is the barren plains of central Texas. The only thing in sight: one dried-up old cactus, *(HE places the cactus on stage.)* and a run-down shack.

ACTOR ONE: I don't see a run-down shack.

NARRATOR: *(Making it up on the spot.)* Uh, well, it's so run down it's dropped out of sight.

ACTORS: *(Ad-lib, unbelievable.)* Noooo! Come on! Tell us!

*(PERCUSSIONIST sound.)*

## **End of Freeview**

Download your complete script from Eldridge Publishing

<https://histage.com/wild-pecos-bill>

Eldridge Publishing, a leading drama play publisher since 1906, offers more than a thousand full-length plays, one-act plays, melodramas, holiday plays, religious plays, children's theatre plays and musicals of all kinds.

For more than a hundred years, our family-owned business has had the privilege of publishing some of the finest playwrights, allowing their work to come alive on stages worldwide.

We look forward to being a part of your next theatrical production.

Eldridge Publishing... for the start of your theatre experience!