

Dialogue Samples from PECOS BILL

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Sample #1

[ZEEK meets his long lost brother BILL on the trail. BILL has been raised by coyotes and thinks he is one.]

ZEEK

What's that growlin'? Dagnabbit! I think it's coyotes! Come on!
This ain't no stoppin' place for us!

(BILL climbs on top of boulder. HE is on
all fours, growling.)

ZEEK (Continued)

Hold up, Paint. That ain't no coyote! It's a feller!
(ZEEK gets off "horse" and crosses downstage
of boulder.)

Why, he must be delirious! Will you look at that? Thinks himself
to be a coyote.

(To BILL, coaxing)

Hey there, feller. How 'bout a little sip from my canteen? I
ain't no mirage. I'm a feller, too ... like you.

(BILL approaches on all fours and sniffs around
ZEEK.)

ZEEK (Continued)

This feller has definitely been out in the sun too long.
(To BILL)

How 'bout a plug of jerky meat, pardner?

(ZEEK takes jerky from his pocket. BILL jumps
up like a begging dog.)

ZEEK (Continued)

It's worse than I thought. Down, boy, down!

(ZEEK looks BILL right in the eye.)

Those eyes ... that nose ... those ears ... that mouth!

(HE suddenly realizes.)

Holy cow!!! I'll be a monkey's uncle!

(Grabbing BILL by his shoulders.)

You're my long lost baby brother Bill, bounced out and left behind
when we crossed the Pecos!

(Growing emotional)
Our Ma and Pa searched everywhere for ya, cryin' and callin'. Oh, brother ... brother Bill! It's me ... Zeek! It's your big brother Zeek!

(BILL licks ZEEK happily.)

ZEEK (Continued)

Hey now, what's the matter with you? You ain't no dog, no coyote. Stop it now, Bill!

(BILL reverts, putting thumb in his mouth and his head on ZEEK's shoulder.)

ZEEK (Continued)

That's better.

(Realizing BILL has his thumb in his mouth)
Well, no, that ain't no better! You're a growed-up man, Bill. Snap out of it!

(BILL takes his thumb out of his mouth.)

ZEEK (Continued)

A growed-up half-naked-man ...

(Looking closely at BILL)
... more like three-fourths-naked! Ooh wee! My work's cut out for me. We'll fix you up, brother Bill. Put you in touch with civil-lie-zation. Why, you must've been roamin' all by your lonesome nigh on twenty years! Come on, Bill, we're goin' to town. Mount up!

(ZEEK motions BILL to get on "horse" with him. BILL, confused, runs on all fours downstage of boulder.)

ZEEK (Continued)

Dadburnit, man, stand up like a man! And put this here saddle blanket on, you jaybird!

(ZEEK "rides" and BILL, wearing the blanket, imitates him.)

ZEEK (Continued)

Now listen here, brother Bill, and listen good. You're a man, same as me. You ain't no coyote. You're not to howl or bark or growl no how no more.

(Pointing off in the distance)
Now, see that there speck over yonder - that's where we're headed. That's a town with people just like me. People, Bill, people.

(HE gets off "horse" and joins BILL.)

Now let me lay this out fer ya. Let's say you meet up with a feller you don't know. Well, a 'course you don't know no one but me, so I'll introduce you like.

(Indicating imaginary person by his side)

"Brother Bill, this here is Mr. Smelt, the blacksmith."

(BILL looks around, tilting his head back and forth like a coyote, and whimpers in confusion.)

ZEEK (Continued)

Well, no, he ain't here now, Bill. I'm just sayin' if he was here what we'd be doin'. But of course we know he ain't and it's just us. But say if I was a strange feller, who you don't know, which of course you don't ... say I was this Mr. Smelt, the blacksmith, fer example, and what would it be that a civilized, well-mannered feller like you would do if he met me, who you don't know - I bein' Mr. Smelt, the blacksmith?

(BILL thinks a moment and suddenly gets the idea. BILL vigorously sniffs around ZEEK, checking him out.)

ZEEK (Continued)

(Angrily throwing his hat on the ground and stomping on it)

I'll be a racoon's cousin! I'm not gittin' through to you.

(ZEEK picks up his hat, dusts it off and puts it back on.)

Stand up. You are not a varmit! You take off your hat when you meet a feller!

(ZEEK takes off his hat. BILL is watching carefully, wanting to please.)

ZEEK (Continued)

(Still irritated)

And say these words: "Howdy do. Fine day, ain't it?!" Now you!

(ZEEK gives BILL his hat. BILL throws it on the ground, steps on it, picks it up, dusts it off, puts it on, takes it off again and speaks angrily like ZEEK.)

BILL

Howdy do! Fine day, ain't it?!

ZEEK

(Grabbing his hat back)
I'll be an armadillo's aunt! This is gonna be harder than I thought.

(Discouraged, ZEEK starts for his "horse," shaking his head.)

ZEEK (Continued)

(Returning and grabbing BILL by shoulders.)
Hey, wait a ding dong minute! I'll be a mountain lion's mama! You talked! You spoke! Why, you can do it, Bill! You can talk like a man! A human bein'! Now, Bill ...

(Pointing to BILL to start him talking)
... say what I say.

BILL

Say what I say.

ZEEK

Well, don't say everythin' I say.

BILL

Well, don't say everythin' I say.

ZEEK

What I mean is, just say what a man would say.

BILL

What I mean is, just say what a man would say.

ZEEK

Dadburnit! Will you stop it?!

BILL

Dadburnit! Will you --

(Before BILL can finish, ZEEK puts his hand over BILL's mouth.)

ZEEK

(Controlling himself)
Now, listen carefully, brother Bill. When we get to town, you will pay attention and say what I say only when I ... only when

I ...

(Searching for a sign)

... when I pull my ear like this.

(ZEEK pulls his ear.)

Got it?

BILL

Got it!

ZEEK

Now, hit the trail!

(BILL falls abruptly to ground on all fours.)

ZEEK (Continued)

I swear I'll be a salamander's sister if I'm not done near the end of my rope! Civilizin' you, my baby brother Bill, is more bothersome than breakin' a buckin' bronco!

Sample #2

[BILL, pursuing his "destiny," comes upon a pack of FELLERS on the trail. BILL is riding a cougar and roping with a rattlesnake.]

BILL

Say now, who's mayor here?

XAVIER

(Slapping his thigh with laughter)

Mayor? Mayor?! That's a good one!

(FELLERS snicker.)

ED

You ain't in no town, greenhorn.

UNK

What's your name, son?

BILL

Pecos Bill.

NED

Oh, my. "Pecos Bill." Now ain't that a fancy handle.

(FELLERS snicker.)

UNK

(Seriously)

I wouldn't insult a feller what's ridin' a cougar and ropin' with a rattlesnake!

(FELLERS cough and shuffle nervously.)

NED

(Hat in hand)

Well ... ah, what we mean is we ain't got no mayor, sir.

BILL

Well, who's boss here?

FELLERS

You are!

UNK

It's uni-animous.

BILL

Boss? Of what? Who are you fellers.?

UNK

I'm Unk. That's Ern, Ed, Ned, Slim and Xavier. We're a bunch of no-count, no-fit, no-way galoots passin' our days on the prairie.

SLIM

The trail stops here.

XAVIER

We're the end of the line.

NED

The caboose of civilization.

UNK

Out here, it's just us and the varmints, critters, snakes, vultures and these here longhorns.

(Longhorns "moo" and horns appear over boulders.)

BILL

What do you do with 'em - those longhorns? Do you ride 'em?

ED

Why, we don't do nothin' with 'em.

UNK

We don't ride 'em and we don't rile 'em, what with them horns they got. When we get really desperate, we all sneak up on one --

ERN

And the next thing you know ... we have a barbecue!

FELLERS

Yee hah!

UNK

But they're mighty dangerous.

NED

And stubborn too.

BILL

I cut my teeth in a coyote pack. I reckon I could handle a bunch of ornery longhorns.

XAVIER

Darn things are takin' over the whole wide West. Herdin' up and hornin' in.

BILL

That gets me to thinkin'. That gets me to figurin' - puttin' two plus two. Well, tell me somethin', fellers. What is your ... destiny?

FELLERS

Destiny?

BILL

Ain't you fellers got no destiny?

NED

You're gettin' too personal.

ED

Who do you think you are, ridin' in here and nosin' about my destiny?

UNK

(Taking charge)

Hold on. Don't git all riled up. He don't mean no harm. Now let's git a few things straight, son. Now ... uh, just exactly what is a destiny?

BILL

Why, it's somethin' we're all supposed to have.

XAVIER

(Overwrought)

I can't help not havin' one. I lost everything when the Rio Grande flooded me out!

ED

And me, I'm an orphan!

BILL

No, no. It's a purpose - a direction. Destiny gives meanin' to your life.

UNK

This is soundin' more and more serious.

BILL

I mean it's a good thing. And everyone can git one.

NED

Do we have to go to town?

XAVIER

I ain't got a red cent.

ED

I'm doin' just fine without spendin' my money on some high falootin' destiny!

ERN

Maybe I ain't the brightest feller in the world but I ain't caught on to what this destiny is.

BILL

Destiny? Destiny is ... a feelin'.

NED

Like a toothache?

ERN

Like snakebite?

BILL

Destiny's like a knowin' deep inside you ... of what you're supposed to be - what you're supposed to do.

FELLERS

Huh?

BILL

What the good Lord meant for you - what life is about.

ERN

(Overcome)

Golly. Well, I ain't got no idea of my DENsity.

UNK

(Hitting ERN with hat)

That's DEstiny!

ERN

Well, I still ain't got no idea!

BILL

Well, I do! For all of us.

(Cows moo.)

BILL (Continued)

I think we're destined to be ... cowboys!

FELLERS

Cowboys?

UNK

Cowboys? Cow ... boys? What the heck does that mean?

BILL

Why, we're destined to make somethin' of this Wild West. We'll take these here cows - these wild longhorns - and give them and us a purpose.

FELLERS

Cow ... boys?!

BILL

We'll herd up these longhorns and head 'em up to where that blue norther blows from. Way up there - up Kansas way. Why, we'll

have us a cattle drive! Those folks ain't never seen nothin' like that. They'll take a real interest in these longhorns. Why, they'd make nice pets ... and keep their fancy grass cut ... and if times was hard them Kansas folks could sneak up on one and ... have a barbecue!

FELLERS

Yee hah!

UNK

Now I'm beginnin' to grasp this destiny idea!

ERN

Can we dress up for our destiny, like you, Pecos Bill?

BILL

Sure thing, Ern. We'll git you a hat and a bandana, too. Yes, we'll have us a cattle drive! Head 'em up and move 'em out! It won't be pleasant. It won't be easy. There's likely to be hardships, disasters and inclement weather.

(COWBOYS shudder.)

BILL (Continued)

But we're cowboys, fellers! Cowboys! It's our destiny!!!