

Cherokee Bend

His father was a man who could never understand,
the shame on the red man's face.
So they lived in the hills and they never came down,
but to trade in the white man's place.
Early in the spring when the snow had disappeared,
they came down with a bag of skins.
In the fall of the year of 1910,
daddy died by the rope down in Cherokee Bend.

Daddy didn't like what the white man said,
'bout the dirty little kid at his side.
Daddy didn't like what the white man did,
nor the deal or the way that he lied.
There was blood on the floor of the government store,
when the men took his daddy away,
but the boy stayed back till he'd come to his end,
then he run like the wind from Cherokee Bend.

Now the mother was alone and the winter was at hand,
and she prayed to her spirit kin.
It was warm in the lodge in the Kentucky hills,
on the day when the boy came in.
Then a blizzard came down and it covered up the door,
till they thought that it never would end,
and he told her the tale of the terrible affair,
in the government store down in Cherokee Bend.

Daddy didn't like what the white man said,
'bout the dirty little kid at his side,
daddy didn't like what the white man did,
nor the deal or the way that he lied.
For three long days and three long nights,
they wept and they mourned and then,
she returned to her work and her weavin',
and they tried to forget about Cherokee Bend.

Now the boy wasn't big but he hunted what he could,
and they lived for a time that way,
but the food run low and the meat went bad,
and she said to the boy one day.
"I'm leavin' tonight and I never will return,
from the land of my spirit kin,
you must take what you need and trade what you can,
for a red man's grave down in Cherokee Bend".

It wasn't very long till she closed her eyes,
and he wrapped her in a robe,
he found her a place on the side of a hill,
and he buried her in the snow.
Early in the spring he was seen comin' down,
with his load lookin' ragged and thin.
Not a year had gone by till he stood once again,
in the government store down in Cherokee Bend.

He was ten years tall and a redskin too,
so he hadn't much face to save,
and the men sat around and they laughed and they clowned,
at the talk of a criminal's grave.
Then a man from the east didn't smile when he said,
"you're the son of that indian scum,
if you value your hide then you better abide,
by the white man's rules here in Cherokee Bend".

Daddy didn't like what the white man said,
'bout the dirty little kid at his side.

Daddy didn't like what the white man did,
nor the deal or the way that he lied.
And he spit on the floor of the government store,
and it served him to no good end,
at the close of the day they had taken him away,
to the white man's school down in Cherokee Bend.

It's been twenty one years since the boy disappeared,
where he run to nobody knows,
but they say he fell in with a man named Jim,
and he rides in the rodeos,
and they say he returns all alone to a place,
hidden deep in the Kentucky glen,
and it's pretty well known who hauled up the stone,
to the grave on the hill above Cherokee Bend.

Daddy didn't like what the white man said,
'bout the dirty little kid at his side.
Daddy didn't like what the white man did,
nor the deal or the way that he lied.
There was blood on the floor of the government store,
when the men took his daddy away,
it was 1910 and they never had a friend,
when he died by the rope down in Cherokee Bend.
It was 1910 and they never had a friend,
when he died by the rope down in Cherokee Bend.