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True Ballad of Jesse James

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(Sherwood Ross)

Jesse James was no lad
He was grown and he was bad,
He robbed the Glendale train.
He was 34 years old
And his only god was gold
To get rich, 15 poor folks were slain.

cho1: Poor Jesse, my heart bleeds
For his millionaire-style needs
He killed with Quantrell's raiders for the South;
When his side lost the war
He just kept killin' like before
He's a hand, a cold heart
And quite a big mouth.

Fourteen men and a girl died
In the dust when Jesse'd ride
The girl trampled at the Kansas fair;
He blew railroad men to hell
And three Pinkertons as well
And liked to write the press
He wasn't there.

In that bloody Northfield fight
They killed two in broad daylight,
Jesse shot the teller in the head;
But the townfolk showed great heart
The shot the gang apart
'Til two of Jesse's thugs lay dead.

cho2: Poor Jesse was not poor
That's a lot of horse manure
He stole half a million from the till;
He was 34 years old
And his only god was gold
And nary a single rich man did he kill.
To notoriety a slave
He'd write the press and rave
Hardly your poor man's saviour;
As for the dirty little coward

Who shot Mister Howard
Why Robert Ford did the world a favor.

Hurrah for Jesse? Save your breath
He left a trail of blood and death
Across a dozen Midwestern states;
Cold-blooded in his wrath
He was your common sociopath
Lyung was one of Jesse's nobler traits.

Be on your way,
Billy Gashade
Who the old James ballad made;
Historians see little truth there in it;
One thing your pack of lies
Has made me realize
There's a press agent born every minute.

cho2:

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