

Marty Robbins

"Ballad Of Bill Thaxton"

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Bill Thaxton was an ex-ranger one of the bravest by far
It's said that old Bill was the fastest man ever to pin on
a ranger's star
Stories about him were legends Bill was the best of the
bold
Bad men all feared him way back in his day but he was
now growing old

Into Bill's town rode an outlaw he wore his gun low and
tied down
He reined in his horse and announced to the crowd if
you speak to me call me Sundown
His clothes were all dark and fancy and topped by a
black leather vest
Somebody asked how he came by his name and if he
was one of the best

The eyes of the tall stranger narrowed he grinned like
the devil possessed
I never fight till the sun's going down and my back is
facing the West

Said he wouldn't be with us tomorrow he only rode in
for one thing
He only stopped by to make Bill Thaxton die so he
could add to his fame
Go give Bill Thaxton a message and tell him a killer's in
town
Tell him we'll meet at the end of the street just as the
sun's going down

Somebody said it had been years since old Bill had
toted a gun
Sundown replied that it wasn't his hide killing old Bill
would be fun
The old ranger sent back his answer tell him that I'm on
my way
I've never ran and I'll meet this young man at any time
of the day

Bill got there just about sunset it still hung like fire in

the sky
In just a few moments out there in the street old Bill or
the outlaw would die

Slowly Bill slid from the saddle and started to make his
advance
The sun hit the old ranger square in the eyes the
shadows had started to dance
Bill started talking to Sundown judging his distance
that way
Their stride was the same and at just thirty feet both of
the men made their play

Bill's gun slipped leather like lightning his forty-four
spoke with a whine
The sun didn't bother Bill Thaxton at all cause the old
ranger was blind
Six shots delivered their message the ranger had
emptied his gun
Bill gave a sigh when there was no reply he knew that
once more he had won

The old ranger lowered his six gun he just stood there
starting ahead
Watching you'd think that old Bill didn't know in front of
him Sundown lay dead

Bill has been gone for a long time but old timers still
can recall
The day the old ranger stood up to the test and proved
he was best of them all

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