

The Bandit (Black Donald)

by George Albert Leddy

**HIS GOODNESS IS BUT BADNESS,
HIS LOVE IS BUT A HATE,
HIS HAPPINESS IS LONELINESS,
HIS LUCK IS BUT HIS FATE.**

Aye! search ye high, and search ye lo'— ye 'Hound-dogs of the Law.'
Yea! Hound-dogs, following on the trail, of one ye never saw.
Ah, do ye hope to get me soon; well, let that hope be dead.
Ye'll only find wherein I've dwelt, to find that I have fled.
I'd shoot ye down, should ye come near; I've done such in the past.
Ye'll never hear the cruel world say—"Black Donald, caught at last."

When but a boy, I felt your sting, for just some childish prank.
Ye snared me like a savage beast, my ship-of-hope, ye sank.
And as I served my sentence, in your State Industrial School,
My soul called out for liberty, my heart grew hard and cruel.
I grew to hate your heartless laws, that branded me with shame;
And swore to wreck my vengeance, when the Day-of-Reckoning came.

The guards walked by like stately ghosts, within all were at rest.
A knife I'd used at work that day, lay hidden in my breast.
I heard the watchman, at his post, send out the call: "All's well!"
And then I like a sneaking thief, crept from my dingy cell.
I sought a guard, my knife in hand, one blow to set me free.
A moan, a groan, a pool of blood—a dash for liberty.

But that was thirty years ago, I've changed a bit since then:
A mountain Bandit, cruel and bold, my soul well lined with sin;
A monarch of the mountainside, my name rings through the land.
The traveler fears Black Donald, and his notorious band.
I've earned the name Black Donald, by the dark deeds I have done.
I never stop at anything, until I know I've won.

I do not hug the mountainside, in dread or trembling fear.
Oft', when they speak of bandits bold—Black Donald's standing near.
And when I hitch my faithful Horse, and call the boys "All-in!"
They drink and talk, as if they thought, I were the King of Men.
They ne're mistrust their liberal host, the man they'd like to see;
With lariat-collar 'round his neck, and swinging from a tree.

Why, I've read the posters, of the price set on my head.
When searching for Black Donald, I myself have searches led;
And left the searching party, in the evening when at rest;
To rob, and then return again; the spoils, safe in my breast.
Ah, had they known their leader was—the man for which they sought,
They would have shown no mercy, they'd have killed me on the spot.

I've waited by the mountain-pass, as watchful as a deer;
Until the welcome rumble, of the stage wheels, I would hear.
And then, most calm and stately, I would boldly take my stand:
A halt, a search, and then pass-on; they'd heeded my command.
But if someone more boldly, my actions should decline;
The stage would pass-on but to leave—one passenger behind.

And though, I am a Bandit; robbing, robbing, night and day;
I haven't got a penny, of the treasure, hid away.
And if ye think, no friends have I; mistaken, all are ye.
Ye'd aught to see the grateful ones, who each night, wait for me.
The Widow, and the Orphan, whom on charity depend;
Would suffer cold, and hunger; but to them—I proved a friend.

And when ye read the horrors, of Black Donald's terrible band;
Just bare in mind, my Horse is all the partner I command.
The deeds we've done, we've done alone, my faithful steed and I.
And when we leave this rough old world—we will, together, die.
And though I've robbed the rich-man, God won't judge me hard, I'm sure;
For what I've taken from the rich, I've given to the poor.

And when the Day-of-Reckoning comes, we'll meet on equal grounds;
We'll see your soul's as black as mine; ye, haunting, heartless hounds.
And 'though you've been the nation's Law, the 'Bandit' then won't fear.
All judged by One, who judges all; fair judgment's always here.
So search ye through the years to come, as through the years that's past;
Ye'll never hear the cruel world say—"Black Donald, caught at last."
