

PANCHO AND LEFTY

Townes Van Zandt

Living on the road, my friend — Was gonna keep you free and _____;
But now you wear your skin like iron — And your breath as hard as kerosene;
You weren't your momma's only boy — But her favorite one, it seems;
She began to cry when you said _____ — And sank into your _____.

Pancho was a bandit boys — His horse was fast as polished steel;
He wore his gun outside his pants — For all the honest world to _____;
Well, Pancho met his match you _____ — On the deserts down in Mexico;
Nobody heard his dying word — Ah, but that's the way it _____.

**All the federales say — They could have had him any _____;
They only let him slip _____ — Out of kindness I suppose.**

Lefty, he can't sing the blues — All night long like he used to;
The dust that Pancho bit down south — Ended up in Lefty's _____;
The day they laid poor Pancho _____ — Lefty split for Ohio;
And where he got the bread to _____ — There ain't nobody _____.

**All the federales say — They could have had him any _____;
"We only let him slip _____ — Out of kindness I suppose."**

The poets _____ how Pancho fell — And Lefty's living in a cheap _____;
The desert's quiet and Cleveland's cold — So the story ends, we're _____;
Pancho needs your prayers, it's true — But save a few for Lefty _____;
He only did what he had to _____ — And now he's growing _____.

**All the federales say — "We could have had him any _____;
We only let him go so long — Out of kindness I suppose."**

**A few gray federales say — "We could have had him any _____;
We only let him go so long — Out of kindness I suppose."**

PANCHO AND LEFTY – EXERCISES

Rhymes: Fill in the blanks. All the missing words rhyme with another word.

Questions:

1. What are the names of the two characters in this song?

_____ and _____

2. What are the three place names in the song? (One is a country, one is a state, one is a city.)

❖ country: _____ ❖ state: _____ ❖ city: _____

3. Which word in the song refers to law officers (like police)?

4. What word in the song means 'robber' or 'thief'?

Synopsis: Choose the blue words that fit.

There was once a [*bandit - poet - singer*] named Pancho. He had a [*bandit - partner - cop*] called Lefty. Lefty [*betrayed - hated - sang a song to*] Pancho. The police [*arrested - gave money to - sang a song to*] Lefty for it. When the police found Pancho, they [*arrested - killed - sang a song to*] him.

Questions for Discussion:

5. What does 'bread' mean in this song?

6. What does the expression "to bite the dust" mean? How is it used in the song?

7. Find three other expressions in the song that refer to Pancho "biting the dust".

8. What phrase suggests that Pancho's death was a lonely one?

9. What phrase suggests that Lefty's life now is not a happy one?