

**Cody the Wandering Coyote**

by Jules de Jongh  
Season 2 Episode 45

[opening theme music and strapline]

Nanny Bea: Oo, oo, oo, my tea is particularly hot today, I hope it cools a bit before my neighbour Jules arrives with a story any...

[knock sfx]

Nanny Bea: minute now.

Nanny Bea: What was that? Is there someone at my door?

Jules: Hello Nanny Bea, it's your neighbour Jules with a story.

Nanny Bea: And I was just telling our listening friends about you, well about your arrival at least. Come in dear.

Jules: Thank you Nanny Bea. Ooo it's nice and warm in here.

Nanny Bea: That would be my tea. It's particularly hot today.

Jules: Well maybe it can cool while I tell you my tale. Are you ready for a story?

Nanny Bea: Oh, yes please.

Jules: Okay then, **Cody the Wandering Coyote**, adapted for radio

Cody was a drifter, a rolling stone, if a coyote could be such a thing. He had no friends, and that suited him just fine. All he was after was a job to occupy his mind and some grub to occupy his belly. Once he got his fill he'd pack up and move on. Folks often wondered about his wanderings, reckoned he was running from something, hiding from his past. By the time they worked up the courage to question him, Cody was long gone, like a hot pot of chilli on a cold winter's night.

These wanderings eventually took Cody to the big broad plains of Wyoming, homestead country, where every buffalo, bear or bison was claiming and carving out a home for himself and his youngins if he was so inclined. This was the Wild West, only not West so much, but definitely wild.

One dusty day Cody came a looking for work. He was as handy herding as he was mending fences. And that is what he told to the first family he came upon, the Muskertons. They were a quiet family of muskrats just trying to get along in this rugged land. They'd been trying to

find a place to build their lodge but had been moved off more times than they had children. Seems some folks had taken a disliking to this family, to all muskrats actually but Cody didn't know that and wouldn't care if he did, well that was until he met Jim Bob Muskerton and his youngest son Jimmy Bobby junior.

So back to that dusty day, Cody was travelling along the water's edge, topping up his canteen when he saw Jimmy Bobby struggling with some cattails.

'You wanna hand there buckaroo?' Cody asked and he didn't make a habit of helping others but Jimmy Bobby was different.

'No sir, I may be small on the outside but I'm big on the in,' said the little muskrat barely visible for all the cattails he was carrying but you could still see he was smiling, as wide as the Mississippi.

Cody respected his choice but walked along beside him all the same. A few paces later they were at what would be or at least could be the makings of a lodge for the Muskerton's. Jim Bob was busy working when he saw Cody.

'We're just minding our own business, trying to build a home here for my family,' pa said a bit defensive.

'How'd you like a hand?' Cody replied and this time he wasn't volunteering, he was looking for what he'd come for, a job.

'Well I don't reckon I could pay much, but a good meal and little pocket change.'

Cody would normally turn down such an offer but then Jimmy Bobby added, 'And I could give you one of my best skipping rocks,' as he dropped his heavy load and started rummaging through his prized possessions.

'The rock won't be necessary boy, but I could use some rock skipping lessons if you could obliged?'

'I've never done me any teaching before so, it's about time I did,' Jimmy Bobby said as Cody tried not to get too attached to this kid. Attachments aren't an option for a wandering coyote.

The deal was done, they shook on it and that's all the paperwork that needed doing. Cody got stuck right in, following Jimmy Bobby's advice. Seems teaching came pretty easy for that little'n.

Things were moving along just fine when Buck Blackbear showed up, 'What brings you 'round these parts?' he asked. Cody didn't know Buck, but he knew his type, full of self importance and little room for much else. Cody paid him no mind and kept on a working.

'I said, who are you?' Buck spoke louder.

‘Actually sir, you said, What brings you ‘round these parts?’ a little voice belonging to Jimmy Bobby replied.

Cody at once stood between the boy and Buck. ‘I’m just helping these kind folks build themselves a home. Not here to ‘cause no trouble,’ Cody said hoping to settle Buck down

Buck wasn’t settled, his kind of ornery was never satisfied. ‘Well we don’t take kindly to muskrats in our territory or coyotes like you sticking your nose in where it don’t belong.’

Jim Bob arrived on the scene and tried his best, ‘Now Buck, we moved when you told us, each time you told us but best I know, this river is outside your territory. Please just let us live in peace.’

‘My territory is wherever I say it is,’ Buck added and he pushed Jim Bob to the ground. Jimmy Bobby grabbed a stick and whacked Buck’s left paw. Buck squealed like a baby, ‘Why you little rodent, I’ll tie your tail in knots and hang you from the nearest tree!’

‘That’s enough, back away from the boy,’ Cody said calmly but with a coldness that scared even Jimmy Bobby.

‘Oh yeah, we’ll you just bought yourself a one way ticket home stranger. Meet me outside the Yeehaw saloon at dusk and bring your holsters armed and loaded.’

‘I’ll be there,’ Cody hissed back.

Jim Bob urged him, ‘No Cody, we’ll move on, we’re used to moving on, nobody needs to get hurt.’

Cody didn’t listen. The sun was setting fast so Cody went to get himself ready. ‘Let me see, what am I packing?’ he said as he examined his arsenal.

In no time he was ready and started heading off toward the town and his destiny.

‘Pa we can’t let him do, we just can’t,’ Jimmy Bobby pleaded. His pa agreed and they headed off to stop him, any way they could but Cody was fast and the sun was faster. Before the muskrats could get there Cody was already in town standing one side of the dusty road, hand on his holster, eyes on his opponent. A pretty Bobcat from the saloon was standing on the roadside when she instructed the slingers, ‘On the count of three, turn and draw...one, two, three!’

Buck reached for his holster but Cody was already armed and blowing right in Buck’s face. The crowd gasped, ‘Hugh!’ In one mighty gust, it was over before it started. ‘Do you know who that is?’ the town folk whispered. The deputy replied ‘That’s Cody Coyote, the best darned gum slinger in all of Wyoming, why he can blow a bubble faster than anyone and pop so loud you’d think the earth was quaking.’

Jimmy Bobby and his dad got there just as Cody was sucking his bubble back in, without a trace of gum on his fur. ‘Does this mean you’ll be staying for a while, Mr Coyote?’

'It's Cody to you Jimmy Bobby and it looks like this wandering coyote has found himself a home.

Jimmy Bobby squeezed him tight, Cody hugged him back. 'Will you teach me to be a gum slinger like you someday?' the boy asked. 'You don't need gum Jimmy Bobby, you got all the strength you need deep down inside.'

Jimmy Bobby smiled his Mississippi wide smile and nodded, 'I reckon so Cody Coyote, I reckon so.'

The End

Nanny Bea: Why thank you Jules. And thank you Jimmy Bobby for your wise words. We could use more muskrats like him. Only a few though as my back garden is heaving with them.

Jules: Really I didn't notice

Nanny Bea: Oh yes, all part of the muskrat space programme, highly secretive of course, but I have seen odd lights coming from their lodges at night.

Jules: I'll have to take a look.

Nanny Bea: Not too close I hope, there are a lot of gum carrying muskrats back there.

Jules: Oh right, well maybe I'll steer clear but I will come back next week for more tales and tea.

Thomas: Go to [NannyBea.com](http://NannyBea.com)

Jules: Go there to find out about all our stories and how to be on the show with a story seed or a wonder word. And do tell your friends about us. See you next week for more Tales and Tea.

[Be on the Show jingle]

Mr Announcer: This has been a Toad in the Hole production for [NannyBea.com](http://NannyBea.com).