

Papa, whiskers twitching with a smile, wiped his cow shoes before wrapping them in a scrap of cloth and hiding them in the back of the closet. On this moonless night, he'd walked deep into the woods under the blanket of darkness. Jars of moonshine, wrapped in burlap, hid in his pockets. A subtle sign of the silent rebellion we mountain people engaged in. Settled at the table, lantern low, he used his knife to sharpen the stump of pencil before putting it to paper. Dark tally marks recorded his sales, a signal he'd outsmarted the greedy government agents again.



Author's Note:

Reading about the prohibition has always fascinated me in part because of the rich stories from the south telling what great lengths moonshiners went to in order to ignore the mandate. [Cow shoes](#) were a real thing, which I find ingenious, and I couldn't resist putting them in my story. The beloved Smoky Mountains have caves that are rich with history and stories of those who gave no heed to the anti-alcohol declarations. I debated adding the [Forbidden Caves](#), but in the end decided against it to keep things simpler.

As a teen, I worked in a gas station and it was illegal to sell alcohol on Sunday. This confused a few out of towners when they attempted to make purchases, and many locals knew to either stock up or where to go to make such a purchase. Back then, the county was considered dry, and it was also illegal to sell alcohol in restaurants.

Things have changed since those days, and I find it intriguing to listen to the rules my eldest now has to abide by in order to sell alcohol at the local grocery store where he works. Though he can sell beer anytime of the day, wine has restrictions. State laws mandate beer sales in the US while the federal government oversees wine sales. Federal law prevents the store from selling wine before eleven am, and also prohibits sales on certain holidays, such as Easter.

The Reluctant Author

