

WASTELAND

Sweat oozes from every pore
As the sun bakes the ground
With each step comes a stumble
With every breath comes a wheezing sound

Death tracks me across this wasteland
Waiting for my labored heart to stop
To steal my soul away
When to my knees I drop

Lost in the middle of nowhere
Caught completely unprepared
Carrying only my regrets
And feelings I never shared

I should have said I loved her
Before I rode away
Just knowing that she knew
Would ease some pain today

My mouth as dry as chalk
My canteen long since dry
The only good from this slow demise
Is there are no tears left to cry

I hoarsely shout I love you
Knowing these words you will never hear
Though maybe they will echo through the ages
And someday reach your ear

Now my death is only hours away
And I will die alone
An unmarked spot known but to God
Reaping the sadness I had sown

Sestina Wyoming

A large rectangle drawn over the great plain
Inside the border stand snow covered mountains
Peopled by hearty men and women and working cowboys
Her streams and hills filled with precious gold
The land unpopulated with skies wide open
Rivers teem with fish running cold and wild

To outsiders the people still appear wild
As the native tribes that once lived upon the plain
But unlike others, their minds are truly open
The people are not afraid to scale mountains
Others have found glory winning the gold
Cowboy hats are the fashion though few are real cowboys

In War Memorial Stadium fans watch their Cowboys
When the Pokes score the crowd goes wild
Everyone decked out in their brown and gold
Those in the west stands can see the high plain
From the student section they can see the mountains
Another touchdown pass to a receiver in the open

From the times when the range was open
The cattle industry was run by cowboys
Leading the cows in summer to the mountains
Where a few would become quite wild
In winter the cattle feed at ranches on the plain
Each fattened Hereford or Angus worth their weight in gold

Under the ground comes a black gold
Coal that runs the country brought to the open
Wells for oil and natural gas cover the plain
Wildcatters and riggers are the modern cowboys
They are taming a land that once was wild
Strong and hardworking, these men are mountains

Her beauty rises with the Teton Mountains
And when her aspen leaves turn autumn gold
The majesty of a grizzly bear still wild
Elk, deer, and the swift pronghorn run in the open
A place one can still find cowboys
Where work is hard, life is fun, and no days are plain

Wyoming is a wild land with a backbone of mountains
Wyoming is a high plain with prairie grass of gold
This perfect state is open ranges home to the Wyoming Cowboys

Cowboy Advice

When flopping on the ground
After a hard trail ride day
Nine things can happen to you
Eight will not go your way

Landing on a sharp rock
Will make you quite sore
Ruining someone's plate of dinner
Is an offense they can't ignore

You could sit on a rattlesnake
The shock will make it bite
Or maybe fall on a scorpion
Whose sting will hurt all night

Sitting where a horse made water
Covers you in a disgusting mud
Not seeing a cactus below
Can turn your rear to blood

Falling careless into embers
Can set your world afire
Landing in fresh cow flop
Will stink up your attire

If you're a lucky cowboy
You will only hit dust
Fortune smiled upon you
But my words you should trust

Plains Phantom

A thick fog smothered the hills.
I trudged fixing broken fence line.
Looking up to the crowded crest,
A shape appeared, hard to define.

Ghostly, hidden in the haze
The figure slowly moved near.
I knew not what the phantom was,
Perhaps it was an elk or deer.

Closer still, it took shape and form,
But I could not believe my vision.
As if the past arose in the mist,
Faulting fog for my brain's impression.

Coming off the hill toward me was a
Tall painted man on a painted gray horse.
Upright and proud, bare legs and chest,
He slowly rode at me without changing course.

I put down my tools and faced him,
An impossible Cheyenne warrior, here!
At a hundred feet he stopped his mount
Nowhere to run, I tried to show no fear.

Pausing without breath, eye to eye.
The horse pawed the wet, grassy ground.
In an instant he urged his horse and yelled.
Hoof beat and battle-cry mix in horrifying sound.

I stood my ground defiantly,
Not knowing what else I could do.
The warrior rode past hitting me hard
With a decorated stick for counting coup.

The warrior raced back up the hill.
Before disappearing in the haze, he spun around.
Pointing his spear at me, he yelled again.
Then turned and left our bloodless battle ground.

The fog swallowed the warrior on the hill.
Leaving me shocked, nursing my sore shoulder.
I picked up my tools and returned to my truck.
Knowing I experienced a world that is older.

City Girl Gone Country

What kind of little girl
Never dreams of ponies and the like
Yet grows up to be a cowgirl
Riding horses instead of her bike

She's a city girl gone country
Trading sneakers for cowboy boots
She does rodeos and county fairs
But the suburbs are in her roots

Her teen years spent idolizing
The rockers of Motley Crue
As she drives her kids to 4-H
The radio plays Chris LeDoux

Though she looks back fondly
On the fun of her younger days
She is so much happier now
Living the cowgirl way