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## The Shot

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## TWO POEMS

## THE SHOT

The summer struck where cattle dust lay strong  
 On fading brush that banked a foothill turn;  
 Road weary steers stung by a stumbling wrong  
 Broke in deep scrub swift riders leaned to spurn,  
 But one crashed wide, and earth the shimmered blow  
 Rolled horse and master in time's rocky flow.

As cowmen turned . . . he stood in waste of sun,  
 Whose hurt was cold, and rage was grief of mind,  
 That now his mount death's huddled course must run,  
 Sped by a shot whose broken haste was kind—  
 Far as the sky the mountains rose to green  
 Toward which they climbed who heard the loud ravine.

## LINES TO THE PAST

## I

The peak grandfather stood on touched a lake  
 with deep reflection; mighty rock no bird could soar,  
 While tepee smoke wound upward like a snake  
 to coil in wind above a forest shore.

A stroke of silence fell among the trees,  
 the tribe was mute, the woods were brightly still;  
 Time's twisting leaf that spins in vagrant breeze,  
 had brushed a king with Autumn's honored will.

The new chief stood in solemn awe apart,  
 a forest sunbeam mocked the shadow in his face,  
 He knew the sorrow of an exile's heart,  
 who walked a last road homeward with his race.

## II

Grandfather rode the mesa in the wind,  
 where history's a wreath of whitened horn;  
 Thirst rose in cactus like a stain, the path was blind,