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Red Solomon / that spring

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Red Solomon

— a view of Sayre's town character —

— by Dr. Grady J. Walker

They called his dusty town
 "Queen of the West" and
 Sometimes "Gateway to the West."
 Under his greasy-gold bushel
 of hair and under his
 sweat-stained, aged, once-white
 Stetson, banded with velvet
 Brown dust, he walked--
 Rather swung, like the
 King of his namesake.
 He "owned" the town, and he
 Held captive the notice of
 everyone on the Saturday afternoon
 Street.
 He never said much; but when
 He did, the more superstitious
 of us half suspected divine
 wisdom flashed through those

blue-stained soul-windows.
 He was an enigma, a clown,
 a soothsayer, but never a problem--
 That is, until one day when he
 Decided he really *did* own the
 Town and with his plastic 45
 Demanded all the cash and valuables
 from the Beckham County National
 Bank.
 "Don't be silly," said Miss Simmons.
 "I don't have time to play games, Red."
 "Neither do I," he screamed and roared.
 And he didn't (have time to
 play games, that is)--and with that
 he blew a hole through the ceiling
 and into Dr. Gum's desk upstairs,
 a hole in the desk of a thousand memories
 and ten trillion particles of Beckham
 County red dirt.
 Everybody said it was some kind
 of a miracle, but they put Red in
 the county jail anyway and
 took away his fantasy.
 The last time I saw him, he
 was sitting on a bench in front
 of the American Hotel, whittling
 a six-shooter out of shinnery wood.

that spring — by Lu Spurlock

when Western Oklahoma wind
 blew fierce
 lightning jagged across night skies
 and thunder roared close enough
 for us to go to the dirt-floored cellar
 it was scary fun

we sat on a canvas cot
 near shelves of fruit filled jars
 and hangings of spider lace

Dad played his French harp
 or spun stories of other days
 while lantern, light glowed
 on the axe he'd use
 to chop out
 if we had a real tornado

wriggling with excitement
 I wished it would happen

until it did