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**An Interpretation Of The Dream
Or The Way The West Was**
by S. K. McDonald

Even a whore must empty her chamber pot
before sharing the foul breath
of nightmares: a red cloth over a table,
again.

a red cloth for gambling, a businessman
listens to the same violin
as a ukelele again and again.

Sometimes, when the whiskey wastes
the man will ferment the milk
of his mare, drink the rain, pray
for a breakdown or to be stabbed
near the abdomen.

To pull the sound of voices closer
to understanding remains unlikely
in a place with a bridge for one man,
a river with heavy silt, and more
then one thousand stones.

On Mondays the wind is slanted
in favor of wiping out
a drunkard's intestines like hallways
swept clean from dust.

The night whispers
of morning's
disappointment

we're never sure
what to make

Knives are what
have separated us
cards and conquest
mean nothing
anymore

If I had to
I'd choose
the opium
to disappear

At a table
beside the bed
I've sat
drunk
& thinking of you

S. K. McDonald

And their horses in the shadows
carry their ghosts
in each other's hooves
it goes this way
because their tails
are tied together.

With a frontier
drenched by rain
I've confused
all of this

& died
in the snow

An appearance of the shootout
lessens the belief in God's ways
of caring for the innocent
or prize-winners of an evening
in the whorehouse.