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Horse Opera 4

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HORSE OPERA 4

So they had one last talk late one night over the phone. What's it about, she said, this poem. Cowboy cleared the rattler from his throat, a leather strop, the handsaw he'd swallowed to build their Bitterroot cabins one stone's throw apart. About lovers, Cowboy said, making love three days straight. Woman wrote it, he said. Knocked mud out of his boots off the back porch like he was in a movie. It was a portable phone.

It wasn't her husband, she said. I'm not your husband, he said. Coughed up some barbwire, gunpowder, a scorpion. Poured himself a drink. And, she asked, are you sure she used the word love. Sure dark as flop out here, he said. You're a regular cowboy poet, she said. Cowboy drank that straight to Whiskey Edge, this side of Plunge.