Fall 1999

Bear Bait (or Once Upon a Time in Wyoming)

Tony Park
BEAR BAIT
(OR ONCE UPON A TIME IN WYOMING)

*Question.* What was big Butch from Buffalo, Wyoming’s sick pony?
*Answer.* Bear bait.

Q. And who is broken bottles in the gut of an old dead tree?
*A.* Butch’s buddy Bones.

Q. And God?
*A.* One headless hare doing a bloody somersault in the middle of the road.

Q. And where were Butch and Bones bristled?
*A.* From Crazy Woman Canyon on.

Q. What were they?
*A.* Trigger-talk, slavers from dogs howling, icy mist & rain, Chain-reaction.

Q. And Jack Daniels?
*A.* Tumbling all the way to Sheridan, a parking lot, a duplex on the edge of town.

Q. And the real fun?
*A.* A divorcee Bones dated once.

Q. Was it a long night?
*A.* Butch said something about taking turns, lighter fluid, a couch out in the snow smoldering, them laughing, her crying.
Q. And God?
A. God picks the wind up. He plays with it for a while, and then He chucks it across the frozen Powder River.

Q. And the woman?
A. The same dull shade of red as the blood that sprays from the ears of docked lambs.

Q. And the bear.
A. The bear was nowhere to be seen.