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Is this where we live . . . in this place  
at this moment, with the air so light and wild?

—Annie Dillard

A Revised Account of the West

They never rode into any sunsets,  
didn't slowly melt themselves  
like witches into puddles,  
or burst, man and horse fused  
in one fell buck, one myth of ash  
gone to the sinking mound.

They rode away from the doors  
of saloons that opened to a twisting  
dance of rock and sand:  
no bright tunes played  
and no feather boa  
slid from a slender neck.

They rode instead toward  
gaseous fusion, in the direction of  
the photosphere as their shadows  
reached back with charred arms, barely  
touching the still, pointed boots  
aimed crosswise at the edge of town.