

## WHO'LL STOP THE REIGN

All my friends were cowboys  
perhaps in another time, another place  
they would have been knights  
they're gone now  
existing only in dreamscape, if there  
if at all.  
Their replacements have arrived  
parked outfront on the gravel  
in an early model Chevrolet  
Bel-Air, two-tone, white sidewalls  
underneath the sign with the big red star  
now pitted orange with rust.  
attached to the bleached white stanchion  
motionless in the dry, still air.  
They've been working to convince me  
that studious judicious action  
is a suitable substitution  
for youthful energy marbled with naiveté

I'm sitting  
within a makeshift patio, behind a  
wornout roadside attraction  
in a straight backed chair, perched  
precariously on a bed of broken glass  
and pottery shards  
my hands clasped together, resting on  
a plain wood table  
staring  
out at the point on the horizon  
where the ribbon of coal black macadam  
meets an ashen sky  
waiting

Jim Cuddy  
October, 2007