

# The Judas Horse

*by* Johnsienoel

In the Backyard:  
we played cowboys and Indians  
on a late summer day.  
I, the squaw, wore hair  
braided in pigtails, a single  
white and black feather  
poking out of my head  
like a lemur tail peeking  
up from the brush  
revealing my position  
as I scouted them out  
incapable of speaking  
the boys' language.  
J. C. brought the 'Shootin Shells'  
cap guns that left smoking puffs  
of smelly burned paper  
hanging in the air.  
*pap pap pap*  
*pap pap pap*  
ricocheted around the yard as I  
*hoo hoo hoo hoo*  
*hoo hoo hoo hoo'd*  
through my hand.  
The battle was on.  
I was unarmed.

Mark dressed the velvet red Stetson,  
too big for his head,  
like a dandy.  
A six year old savior  
with fringe on his pockets  
flapping as he, the 'Judas horse'  
led me 'round back

where other boys from the block  
circled up and corralled me.  
The game turned to keep away.  
A kiss, ponied up,  
bought you freedom.

