

Cowboys

We talk about the latest trend
of cowboys and neo-Westerns
which despite ourselves, we like.

I say how much I love the way
they ride their horses, hard
but with so much control

coming from their knees,
and the scenes where they remove
the tack after some dusty brave

adventure - or get an urchin
stable hand to do it for them -
then stroke the horse's nose or

perhaps blow lightly in her nostril
or say something in her ear,
tilt their sweaty hat and say goddamn,

they need some rest. I say the best
bits are the views from horseback,
the technicolour vistas of snowy

mountains, wooded slopes or
endless desert when you just know
snakes or wolves or over-reaching

oil execs will soon heave into sight,
close up or in the distance, and
the music takes a dive from brittle

tinkling to the heavy chords. I say
I want to be the cowboy with the scar
on his right hand who only speaks

when they've all finished shooting,
the one who spits less frequently but
with venom and a better aim. You say

you've read the previews and he dies
before the second series and I yell, don't
tell me how he dies, or who plays him

in real life, or when he left his wife
of 17 years for an actress he shacked
up with in an entirely different genre.