

At the End of the Day

for Mayor Alan Lowe

The cowboy on his painted horse
rides sundown to his bunkhouse,

across the field, the peasant
drags his plough toward the barn,

the monk climbs up the mountain
into bells and solitude . . .

and somewhere even farther,
beneath a glacial moon, a man
holds up a torch to see the trail
that leads home to his cave.

There, he etches out the story of his day –
tusk and claw, the river's leaping fish,
mammoth footprints in the dust.

All the wonders of his life
he scratches into stone,
and leaves the marks of who he is,
then lies down beside the fire
to dream another story –

a new birdcall floating from the trees,
a shower of light that falls out of the sky,
and through the wild forest, a new path
he follows out into a clearing by a stream
where creatures that he's never seen
bend down to drink the water.

by Carla Funk
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