



Penned by Lantern Light

This column will spotlight members of the Western Wordsmiths Chapter of the Western Music Association. It will highlight an invited poet guest with possible short biographical information of his/her works. If a member of the Western Wordsmiths Chapter and if interested in submitting one piece of original work for publication, please contact the Western Wordsmiths chapter president.

Renewin' All Our Hopes

Dennis Russell September 9, 2013

It's been a long five years with so little rain or grass.
Prices are sky high and I'm just trading gold for gas.
The bulk feed cost is climbing. It makes hard to wean the calves.
So I broke the cookie jar and cashed in my dollar halves.

Time took my three best mammas, my oldest Hereford cows.
And we sold the red bull 'Bob'. He'd been perfect up 'til now.
I shipped my heifer calves last fall along with my old stock.
My herd keeps heading south like slow seconds on wall clocks.

I'm raising soggy little calves on mammas chewing seeds.
They're eating last year's bales that grew right up from weeds.
Why should a man hold on to what he's barely got?
A bunch of mamma cows with calves who graze on Satan's lot.

There's still no rain or grass and it's almost turned July.
West wind still blows so hard. I've not seen it go this dry.
The water holes gone bad and so has most the crick,
And the mud had dried and cured into hard adobe brick.

But I heard a voice within, telling me to just keep on,
There is always hope to have, for the summer's not half gone.
Well the Mrs. and this Mr. prayed our own convincing prayer,
That for the next year, and the next, we'll still be working there.

And then the absolute next morning I woke up in a cloud.
Then two, then three, then more, I just cried right out real loud.
"Lord bring us needed rain. I know you must remember how.
Let it heal up all our fields and feed our horses and our cows."

The wet sweet smell of summer rain was surely in the air,
The constant bawling of the cows, they told us it was there".
I will not now imply that the drought was cured that day.
Nor even in one week or two, but the fix was on the way.

The monsoon wind had finally come. Our fear for now was done.
That overdue life-giving rain cooled off the South-West Sun.
Now in the weeks that followed, in the gauge it registered,
And by the fourth I fed no hay to my grass-contented herd.

If it kept on raining steady the pasture wounds would mend.
For the first time in five years all the ponds will fill again.
The herd would move to re-grown grass. Our creek 'be running clear.

And we'd even keep are heifers and put tags in their right ear.
Well it doesn't take that much just some inches of good rain,
To make the ponies prance and Cowboy Angels sing again.
Our cows are out there grazing on the side of grassy slopes,
While we fatten up with pride, and keep Renewin' All Our Hopes.



Dennis Russell Nazelrod and his wife Jana live in Cimarron, New Mexico where they own and operate a small cabinet shop and antique business. This helps support their cow/calf operation. Dennis writes about the day to day adventures of living and working in the west.

His passions are reciting Cowboy Poetry, playing guitar, riding his horse 'Scout', and living. Dennis fulfilled a dream when he produced The First Annual 'Cimarron Cowboy Music and Poetry Gathering' in August. The gathering was so successful it will increase to a two-day event and the dates are already set for August 21-22, 2015.