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Arapaho Surrender

Pandora Dixon

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Arapaho Surrender

The circle drawn in a darkened cell.
You stare through shaman nowhere: eyes flat black
like scorched ground. No more magic on the plains,
The grass has dried and withered to pavement.
You ride the last horse standing

on a cheap, splintered chair. Perched,
arms out, you wobble like a flightless bird;
pink feathers glued to a trinket headdress.
You are hollow; empty fingers tie
the knot. The rope dangles, a shadow lasso

on the wall. Ghostly wheel turning,
rolling towards the finish. Your end,
merely a formality. You were born
in a graveyard. Baptized in whiskey
and tobacco spit. To leave must

be to leave alone—blood drained
and pale. A corpse has no choice but
finally to lie still. You cinch the leather
cord and kick, suddenly alive, twisting
in a brittle dance. Colors like warpaint

streak your face. A vision of flint passion
calls you. The ancient voice clings, infant
cry at birth. An aborted warrior.

Pandora Dixon

