Sketch

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A Love Poem

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Love sat in our house
two tired cowboy boots
Dull brown leather
Sharp shapes cracked around the worn ankles

Inside our front door
the two towers, slightly slouching,
guarded my sister’s mud-covered Keds
a pair of my mother’s black heels
and two pink jelly shoes

Boots that piloted The Blackhawk
along the Mississippi
South to St. Louis one week
North to Winona the next

He returned between trips
in fraying flannels
presents for his girls packed in the back
of his decaying Custom Classic truck

When I was five
he took me to Longhorn’s Western Wear
where my dimpled fingers
flew through the fringes and beads

I found him at the back of the store
holding a beautiful pair of Laredos
examining them from every angle
measuring the smooth heels with his eyes
running his finger along the stitching
But ultimately setting them back on the shelf
after seeing the bright orange tag

He squeezed my shoulder
and we walked back to his truck
my new sneakers gleaming in the sun