**THE TROUBADOR’S DEPARTURE**

When the long, pale riders come down from the hills,

down from the edge of the forest on their tall horses,

coming easy and slow with all the time in the world,

relaxed and looking about them as they always do,

a cold wind will come on ahead of them,

bending the heavy grasses all through the valley.

This is what happens the day they come for a singer,

always a wind when they come for one of their own.

The old people say, the singers are always at home

the day the pale riders come steadily up through the valley,

relaxed and looking about them as they always do,

the fair huntress, the three dark brothers.

When they come for a singer, they’re coming to bring him home,

that’s what they say, the old people who know.

Leonard has lately been singing us songs of the road,

this is what happens before they come down from the hills.

The women will bare their breasts down in the harvest,

the men will come in from the hunt, solemn and silent,

the children too will be silent, gathering to the singer,

and the oldest woman among us will sing the farewell.

The tall huntress will lead up the strong black horse,

the saddle crested with silver — stars and a moon.

This is what happens, the day they come for a singer,

they lead up a riderless horse to bring him away.

Gracias, Senora, gracias for the loan of Leonard,

let him speak kindly of us when he goes home.

Gracias, Senora, gracias for the loan of Leonard,

let him speak kindly of us when he comes home.

*i.m. Leonard Cohen*