Cohen Leonard "Ballad Of The Absent Mare"

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Say a prayer for the cowboy His mare's run away And he'll walk til he finds her His darling, his stray but the river's in flood and the roads are awash and the bridges break up in the panic of loss.

And there's nothing to follow
There's nowhere to go
She's gone like the summer
gone like the snow
And the crickets are breaking
his heart with their song
as the day caves in
and the night is all wrong

Did he dream, was it she who went galloping past and bent down the fern broke open the grass and printed the mud with the iron and the gold that he nailed to her feet when he was the lord

And although she goes grazing a minute away he tracks her all night he tracks her all day
Oh blind to her presence except to compare his injury here with her punishment there

Then at home on a branch in the highest tree a songbird sings out so suddenly Ah the sun is warm and the soft winds ride

on the willow trees by the river side

Oh the world is sweet the world is wide and she's there where the light and the darkness divide and the steam's coming off her she's huge and she's shy and she steps on the moon when she paws at the sky

And she comes to his hand but she's not really tame She longs to be lost he longs for the same and she'll bolt and she'll plunge through the first open pass to roll and to feed in the sweet mountain grass

Or she'll make a break for the high plateau where there's nothing above and there's nothing below and it's time for the burden it's time for the whip Will she walk through the flame Can he shoot from the hip

So he binds himself to the galloping mare and she binds herself to the rider there and there is no space but there's left and right and there is no time but there's day and night

And he leans on her neck and he whispers low "Whither thou goest I will go" And they turn as one and they head for the plain No need for the whip Ah, no need for the rein

Now the clasp of this union who fastens it tight? Who snaps it asunder the very next night
Some say the rider
Some say the mare
Or that love's like the smoke
beyond all repair

But my darling says
"Leonard, just let it go by
That old silhouette
on the great western sky"
So I pick out a tune
and they move right along
and they're gone like the smoke
and they're gone like this song

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