St. James Hotel, Cimarron

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The evening wind rustles through the cottonwood trees; 
a solitary tumbleweed rolls down the main street. 
To my right, the saloon door swings; 
I turn back to my whiskey sitting on the old oak bar. 
Through the mirror, I glimpse the prize antelope head— 
the black eyes leer over my shoulder. 
I ask Jim to fill my glass, 
savoring the last of its contents. 
The Winchester rifle on the wall gleams, like a polished rodeo belt buckle, 
the quiet bar reflecting in the metal. 
Above my head, I count the holes, 
those left from gunfights of years past, 
6, 7, 8, 9 . . .
many more, 
but the whiskey distracts me. 
Pulling the glass from my lips, 
I taste dust on the air, dry and bitter. 
The floor rumbles as though a steam engine were approaching, 
but it’s the boiler kicking in, beyond the wooden planks below. 
In Cimarron, 
the wild town, 
the St. James Hotel rests, 
left lonely amongst the sage.