

## Horse Facts

### // Horses in the Rapture

In the 8th grade, our class went to a horse auction  
and a man in a suit & cowboy hat taught us that the slightest movement  
could be interpreted as a “bid”.

I’ve been paralyzed since,  
thinking that my body could be misunderstood enough  
to be stuck with a half-ton stallion that could kick collapse my lungs  
or split my head like a rock melon.

I miss the point all the time—  
at least in basketball, I could get a H O R S E  
my brothers would let me play until H O R S E S  
sometimes till H O R S E S-I N-T H E-P A S T U R E.

Cousin Keisha kept an old Amish buggy horse named Fiesta  
in a fallow part of our farm.

It was 18 hands tall and had never seen tail lights and belt buckles.  
When they first tried to bring Fiesta home, he wouldn’t step into the hitch haul.  
Uncle Wendell drove to the next county over to buy two cases of Bud  
so Fiesta could be stumble-sway-pushed inside.

My friend had a horse named Susie Q.  
who wasn’t brought in from the pasture in time.  
They all made it inside the house and watched from the basement window  
as the tornado plucked up Susie Q.  
and placed her down yards further.  
Imagine, not knowing about weather systems or gravity.  
Susie Q. must have had to accept the fact  
that this is a thing that can happen from time to time  
since she couldn’t fully arch her neck back  
to check the sky for other floating horses.

Susie Q. & I are alike in the way  
that we are both worried about the Rapture.  
I am afraid that one day I will come home  
to an empty house with all the lights on  
Jesus will have taken everyone out to buy cigarettes and I will be left—  
shifting foot to foot, alone  
save for all the horses.  
& we will have to make small talk somehow.

## Spaghetti Western

And to think,

we never thought to look at a whole horse before  
some Italian man named Sergio got behind a camera and yelled "*inizio!*"

So now I have to reckon with things as they are  
moving forward & slowly.

My favorite thing to watch on TV is the finales where people slowly exit  
until the last person lingers, smiles, and then flips off the light switch.

I think the audience will stay in their seats for a long shot of us, our silhouettes knocking  
shoulder to shoulder until we cross the road beneath the Kosciusko street station.  
The walk light blinks red and we are far away.

This shouldn't surprise you,  
but once I came to the fourth-grade dressed up as Annie Oakley  
with two fat yellow braids and a loaded BB gun.

I felt the most myself when I shot soda cans off the heads of kids at recess.

That summer I nearly lost my left eye when one of my brothers shot me with an air rifle.  
That's when I learned to look at things from a distance.

The first time you took me back to your apartment I said  
*Well, look-*

*guess this makes me the comeback kid*  
but you didn't laugh, you got a towel and wiped off my back,  
and I realized I should just let things be nice for once.

All my other endings haven't been that good.  
Disappearing is never as helpful as I think it'll be.

It's hard to stand still, to let myself be a whole horse.

Here,

maybe I should practice.

This coke can is empty, see if you can knock it off but first take ten paces that way.  
That's right. Turn around and count. I'll be here

and

when you turn around, I'll be here too.