



From a painting by Diego Rivera

Liz Minette

Horse Poem

Fifteen maybe, they are content
in this field bordered only
by Harney Road.

Their silky, muscled necks to afternoon grass,
I lift fence wire,
slip through, approach.

Heads raise, one by one.

Then, like some tribal cue,
they all turn, pack, gallop
in my direction.

Ancient rocking, dipping like swallows,
I am cause and destination of this
equine storm.

It all happens so fast,
I just stand as they rocket around me.

One gangly foal, running in the middle,
its eyes wide and level with my chest,
squeaks and darts past, last second.

And then it's over, the other side of me.

They drop their heads, graze again.

Next, I'm just hand to grass,
grab a clump, extend
an offering.

Two heads raise this time and two bodies
walk toward me.

One, forelock in her eyes, hangs back
while the other comes up, softly
lips from my hand.

I feel the velvet couch of her nose.

She turns around then,
tail swishing, ladies gown sound,
and touches noses with shyer one:

my hand grass nuzzles
field road beauty
luck this time
this day

Rabbit

The dead rabbit scared her.

She was shoveling powder sugar snow off the concrete porch, and there it was, lying between the house's foundation and where the lavender and thyme remained hardy beneath a blanket of snow, contained yet in their squat, sun-faded planters.

One of its feet propped like soft luck on the basement sill, the rabbit looked like it had been trying for something.

No blood or snatches of hair. No gray ghost of wings sailing above snow.

It looked like a forgotten, oversized mitten.

It had the coloring of neighborhood calico, nobody's cat, who subsisted intuitively, shyly, house to house, on scraps and kindness.

The rabbit's plump body and gentle eyelids made it look like it was simply sleeping. The woman, gingerly, touched it with shovel's edge, afraid it would spring awake.

Nothing.

The rabbit cupped neatly into shovel's well, and the woman walked with its limp, dappled remains over to norway pine, tossed them, where they disappeared beneath a puff of snow.

Food for other things later.

The woman returned to the steps, continued shoveling.

And where the rabbit had been, a dark scrape of earth against home.

Liz Minette's poems have appeared in *Abbey*, *PROOF Quarterly*, *Nerve Cowboy*, *Blue Collar Review* and *Calyx*.