

## **A Horse Called Lacey**

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*This is a poem about a Standard Bred horse, the lead mare of her herd. She was rescued from the slaughterhouse by her current owner. She is also a gatherer of orphan animals, and has become the guardian of both a stray pot-bellied pig (called Hamlet) and a ferret.*

This is my horse and I am her human, indistinguishable.

In the Milky Way that spins in the deep celestial pools  
of her eyes, I see myself – and yes, that’s the stuff  
of infatuation, of loving someone unconditionally,  
the kind of love where you cannot give without  
being twice replenished. But this is a sober, nobler love,  
not songbird emotions chattered under blinding suns  
this love has the arc of the Eagle’s cry, up swell of thunderheads  
in her tail, when wraiths of wind would snap branches  
our hearts beat brave and confident – this secret  
of the soul that is hers, and hers only, to tell.

Neither she nor I are as young as we look, curled around  
the tail end of eternity, we can remember in the dim light  
of past life our ancient ways, the pacts we bore  
to ride into, through, and beyond civilization together  
oaths at the river’s skin, whistles to call up instinct  
we ride in vivid recall, so much hardship and bloodshed  
pageantry and excess, to stand at the naked spirit’s expo  
to return in bits like ghosts at limbo’s door, a quick fog  
sets in as I turn to go back to a car, a road, a job, a life apart.

Time delays forever fading like cave paintings, day's drawl  
survives the batted night living in a ballot of glass and steel,  
perpetual lottery of luxury and subsistence, why worry?  
I am in mindsight of your talking ears, right angle curious...  
"yes, I am thinking of you..." hmm, some hay, "I know  
the philosophies of naught, some tip, life force spills out  
you cannot let go of your tale, so I give you some of mine"  
She is angry waiting with a scientifically heavy heart  
that echoes from my skinny ribs. I want to brush her better.  
Human affairs – to loiter in the grand design of time  
Wasted away, inexorably indisposed, we are coming, soon.

Olga dreamed me into you last night, we would not go back  
into the stable. "Now it is time to go" I hear you thinking.  
The yard is full of birds, juncos, robins, flickers, blue jays  
woodpeckers, bush tits, sparrows, chickadees, gulls, hawks,  
the barn swallows that nested near you, in your forelock  
how you open doors and become the guardian of remainders  
these mercy stables a home to Jewels and Stars, with the giant  
from the funny farm and a Buddhist monk swinging low down  
blues with a friendly ferret and Hamlet, the pot-bellied Dane  
who came to you in your liking of rotund waltzing wildlife.

Ah, the media torrent unglutes the sediment of society – like fish,  
we cannot see clearly, mercury, arsenic, lead in the suspended silt  
who knew it would go so badly for the oneness of life on earth?

Like the heroic hummingbird you do what you can, as if life depends  
on you, and it does, all are welcome, carrying the globe on your back  
the tailing ponds are bursting upstream, carting the dying world  
inside an Ark of smog and mean advantage, the torture track, races  
hobbled you to wisdom, the sight of slaughterhouses and horrors  
of human distribution, to find a fenceless field, run one last horizon  
with the setting future hot in your nostrils, and a meadow to roll in.

**Bio**

Kedrick James is a poet, scholar and instructor in the Department of Language and Literacy at the University of British Columbia. His work focuses on the connections between analogue and digital media and takes a poetic approach to examining the affordances of new media. His work has appeared in a variety of formats, including books, journals, CDs, vinyl records, cassettes, video, film, and multimedia installations.