

TURN OUT TIME

Three mares, in lazy-day, summer-fit shape,
Their curves on display in afternoon light.
Winter blankets cast off for sunshine drapes.

Bronze statues, until tails swish at fly bites.
Necks stretched long, chiseled heads deep
In pasture grass rain-grown rich, withers' height.

In stalls, somewhere, horses on their feet sleep
Through the heat, willing a breeze to stop by.
These three can take to shade under trees steep.

For now, they are content, say their horse sighs.
With no breeze to tickle tender flanks, hips
to startle to a lope, tails arched high.

They tug and pull stalks through whiskered lips.
Synchronized, three right fores lift, settle.
Later, they'll wonder to trough for long sips.

The scene, against grass green, could win medals.
A black-trimmed bay, sorrel and red dun
All touched with white, and oh so gentle.

Heads come up fast at sound of distant gun.
Six ears forward, frozen, they wait for more sound.
None comes; back to grazing, no need to run.

Faces buried, their blaze, snip, star near to ground.
All have left hinds with a half-sock the same.
The dun preps to roll, bends knees, tucks, goes down

White hind in air, foreleg cocked like a crane.
Dad used to say, "Horse rolls one way, fine,
She's worth two bits; both ways, a buck, plain

And fair. Was that true, or an Old West line?
I think of a legend read at age ten
Of a horse with a white left hind, a sign

He would run fastest again and again.
A summer without real horses to tame.
Astride, wind in face was a dream back then.

Now one's mine. I call, she comes to her name.
Heaven: my fingers tangled in her mane.