

Hannah Craig

Large Small Horses

The mushroom in the rib cavity
would bloom—nobody would see it.

Lockjaw would make a human empty of words;
the jasmine inured

from light, with white
aphelion folds. Nobody to

pluck it—a worm-room. A world of locusts and wasps.
And the horses, skinny, near the tree line.

Through the fog, they come down to the salt and
lick it, graze in the old cemetery,

among the mosses, between bones
that are air. Or they pull with their teeth and a hole

sucks hard, a blacksnake, a body
at the end of it. Remorse in the lost flank

of soy, corn, wheat; left turn and then a gallop through
the bittersweet. A broach. Faience splintered, a porcelain

daisy-chain, teacup handle. One dun
flank joins to another. The coll where vine meets ivy, root

meets winter. These are not thunders
on a plain. Or storms catching at dusk, turning up

hooves of malt and barley, turning like a sail,
breeze caught on a rusted screw. These worlds will be

like a lamp to our feet. Their forelegs thick with mud,
they depart in one direction and we in another.

Hannah Craig lives in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Her work has recently appeared in *The American Poetry Journal*, *Northwest Review*, and *Tampa Review*.

“Where I grew up, there was a difference drawn between the ‘front porch’ and the ‘back stoop.’ The front porch had chairs, columns, a painted wooden floor...and it was a great place for cooling off at the end of the day, the entrance that guests used. But it was the ‘back stoop’ that got most of the real action, that was the entrance to our home and lives. That’s where we shucked corn, shelled peas. Where our muddy shoes sat until cleaned. Where we found the fattest toads, sitting in the run-off from the garden hose. And that was the door that slammed behind you when you were furious. The door you opened when you came home, again, no matter how long you’d been gone. The screen through which the barncats called to be fed. The glass with handprints all over it.”