

THE HURRICANE HUNTERS
(Equus caballus, feral)

No fresh hoofprints circle
the last cattle cistern; they're all headed
for the scrublands of badgers and bobcats.
Ole Hurricane, that wily mustang,
must've guessed-- ain't no space to spare
when ranchers rile up and load up.

Hate rides saddles bristling
with Winchesters and double-barrels
ready to make their point: Green plains
and water are for cows, not to share
with what oughta be in dog food cans.
You hear me, Hurricane?
I'll find you, I'm ridin' your own kind.

Bane of us all, I know it was you
an' your mares
that balded my best grassland. You
an' the always-trailing herds of hunger
you prob'ly sired half of. Black
to the bone, scarred from years
of bein' sheik, I've seen you fight
for your harem, seen you beat out rivals
with a bulgy-eyed stare, a flip of ravelly mane.

I've seen you bare your teeth, shake
your head and whicker an equine damn and dare
that says no man can ride you, no rope
can keep you an' I believe you. But now
you got nine mad cowmen after your hide.
And me, I've got an hour's head start.

Yeah, I see you yonder, Hurricane. Hurricane
of the high plains, thirteen mares rich.
My thunder is loud an' my aim is good.
That's right, swear at 'em, nip their rumps
an' move 'em out. Run 'em all day, run 'em fast.
I want you out there, wild-shiny like obsidian
with hooves as sharp, arrogant as the whine
of that last ricochet off the rocks. I want you
to hang on somewhere, Hurricane. While maybe
my uncertain kind learns better how to weigh
the balance of life and life.

--Glenna Holloway,
LYNX EYE, 1995