

A DAY AT DANADA

Her eyes roamed the vast sweep of prairie grasses
like rippling ocean waves. Early twilight intensified
the green. An intermittent breeze ruffled wheat
and corn rows to the west and acres of trees beyond.
She paused often as she approached the stables, smiling
at the soft whinny she recognized as her favorite brood mare.
Sometimes she had to stand still and mentally pinch herself
into belief-- so much beauty belonged to her
and her gentleman farmer. Knowing how blessed they were,
they had resolved to always give back. Generously and often.

How long had they been in their evergrowing paradise,
each day a new scene, new adventure? She caught her breath.
Hard to believe they bought the first acreage in '29.
Years later, just back from an exciting day at Arlington,
she told Dan she wanted a race horse.
He grinned, then bought her eight yearling thoroughbreds.
She remembered raising good broodmares and foals.
They were fortunate in finding good trainers
and the Rice colors, cerise and white
won many honors at the tracks.
The Ada L. Rice Racing Stable was becoming well-known.

Oh, they still raised cows, chickens, draft animals and dogs,
and she still loved to paint and be a story teller,
but her heart was saddled to the sleek backs, flying manes
and lightning hooves of her first love. And her secret dream
of winning at Churchill Downs.

In 1965, it came true.
Her three-year-old bay with the white star on his head
was the first under the wire in the Run for the Roses.
Lucky Debonair won the Kentucky Derby
and the world's most coveted trophy.
In 1966, his stablemate, Advocate, lost it by only a neck.

Now it was a new decade as Ada walked on through the fields
beyond the paddocks, her head bowed in gratitude
for their many blessings
and for the encompassing beauty of Danada, their home.