

THE DISPOSSESSED  
(Equus caballus, feral)

His brown tail swishes like ravelings  
of raw silk. His soft nicker builds  
to a snort disturbing the dust. His herd  
moves too slowly, heads bowed and bobbing  
as he drives them to scummy hot water  
placed there for cattle thirst.  
The white spotted mustang knows its source,  
knows he and his kind are not welcome.

Nervous as a sweat bee, he menaces the mares  
with his teeth, tries to hurry them, nipping,  
darting after his latest conquest  
wandering wide and listless past the trough.

He smokes with flies.  
Snapping his mane, muscles shivering,  
he shakes their torment off new wounds  
crisscrossing old scars.

Apart, a young rival sorrel watches  
behind a creosote bush. Nostrils flaring,  
he knows about the dried blood  
on the white spots he races out to challenge.

Before last light drops below  
the dust-deviled plains,  
the sorrel wears a redder shine on one flank.  
But the mares, still indifferent, thirsty again,  
are all his.

While another stallion waits until sunrise.