

# TAKE HEART

## A Conversation in Poetry

*Edited & Introduced by Wesley McNair,  
Maine Poet Laureate*

The late Kate Barnes often drew the horses she kept on her blueberry farm in Appleton. In today's poem she chooses to write about them instead.

### In the Pasture

*by Kate Barnes*

It would be impossible to draw these three workhorses  
without a pencil of light  
as they stand broadside to the afternoon sun  
outlined with narrow lines of fire around their vast  
chestnut forms, almost black against the dazzle.  
The young mare swings her long tail from hip to hip,  
and her Titian-blond mane hangs over her shoulder  
like the ringletted chevelure of a Victorian belle,  
innocent and alluring.

Beyond her  
the two big geldings, brothers and team mates,  
scratch each other's wide red backs  
with careful incisors.

Swallows fly  
over the grass, cloud shadows cross the lake  
and darken the blue of the hills on the opposite shore  
but in the pasture the sun is shining,  
the afternoon wind has driven off the flies,  
and the three big horses are all at their ease;  
a small, happy society  
of souls who are gentle and do no harm,  
who live in God's pocket, who spend the long summer days  
moving from sunshine to shade and back to the sun,  
who want nothing but to be where they are.

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