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.