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# No Whip, No Velvet

Cal Bedient

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## *Cal Bedient*

### NO WHIP, NO VELVET

Three minutes I'm counting you,  
collar up against the snow I'm  
counting on you to break from the fix  
the voluble masters put you in,

stiff in green impasto, your breath  
a heavy velvet, your tongue tip  
wedged in their virile brush,  
the angels in the rococo ceiling

dragging your hair like virga, virgin still.  
You've lost your orange center,  
you're a breeze in a jar,  
everything hurts as you are.

The unlane feeling you'll thunder  
through when I've started with you,  
showing me your beautiful long back  
free of traces, like a horse that tosses

its rider at the very first hurdle,  
drop-stitching around the rest  
and leading the pack (which feels  
the same as winning), is what I call

*Many horses running, one  
horse dancing.* The muddy red  
umbrella dead at the bottom of the Galway  
canal and the boy vomiting at the Pass

Out gate (shoved from behind by a man  
who thinks he's stalling) are realism,  
but you're real as a tight field  
with forty-eight legs, none matching,

all flying, two minutes I'm counting  
you hardly here anymore, isn't that you  
waking up to coffeepot morning, dead  
yammerings of coyotes in the grounds?

I'm counting you one dust-  
colored dustcoated pioneer.