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Gift Horses

Jack Gilbert

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**Gift Horses**

He lives in the barrens, in dying neighborhoods and negligible countries. None with an address. But still the Devil finds him. Kills the wife or spoils the marriage. Publishes each place and makes it popular, makes it better, makes it unusable. Brings news of friends, all defeated, most sick or sad without reasons. Shows him photographs of the beautiful women in old movies whose luminous faces sixteen feet tall looked out at the boy in the dark where he grew his heart. Brings pictures of what they look like now. Says how lively they are, and brave despite their age. Taking away everything. For the Devil is commissioned to harm, to keelhaul us with loss, with knowledge of how all things splendid are disfigured by small and small. Yet he allows us to eat roast goat on the mountain above Parakia. Lets us stumble for the first time, unprepared, onto the buildings of Palladio in moonlight. Maybe because he is not good at his job. I believe he loves us against his will. Because of the women and how the men struggle to hear inside them. Because we construe something important from trees and locomotives, smell weeds in a hot July afternoon and are augmented.