

## **Movement 6**

### **Weaverthorpe**

they know the rites of way:  
my hand has only to flick  
the swaying, high-boned hip,  
to nudge the pendulous head,  
set udders swinging between  
hind legs patched with soil and shit.

by them I am known,  
my herder's gait.  
their names are my lineage,  
their smell. warm turf,  
sweat and hair-grease,  
grass with the scent of cream to it,  
rich on the lip,  
    a bellyful.

each jaw longer than my handspan,  
there is no tongue thicker  
its curl   crop   rip.

I know too, the carving of breast from bone,  
how each death holds the slather of birth.  
the warm peel of hide and flesh, the blood  
    a pulse,  
rich and sticky, seeping into soil.  
watering it,  
    like the stream in flood  
guzzles at gravel.

this surge is in every vein,  
throbbing in the neck,  
in the sweat and heft of ribs  
and flank.

    the gape  
of each body in spate,

rhythms of thigh and hip  
and thirst.

we are made  
through this slow stumble  
and trip of hooves and feet.  
the herd's rise and dip  
where we have worn the chalk skin  
    into scars.

so we mark the land's curve  
with our dead, cut them into its bone.  
they watch us come  
and go.  
our crossing of the land by their marks,  
    watering at dawn  
    the noon-day graze  
    the herding home.

we are their thread, living and dead  
woven each day  
through our warp  
    and weft.

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