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Retired

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Dave Schelbaas

This morning's walk was the same old walk past Tower Field,
the ash trees behind the left field fence
nearly bare now and the ground littered with yellow leaves,
wet and shiny after last night's rain. The horses
were the same two horses that have been grazing
in the green pasture for as long as I can remember,
a dun colored gelding and a bay stallion with a white
forehead blaze. They looked as if they were ready to go on parade,
their wet hides having been groomed all night by the rain.
As I came up to where they stood in the southwest
corner of the field, they reached their heads over the wire fence
to smell me, so close my face touched the head of the bay.
Their nostrils were large and quivering
and their eyes were full of dole.
I wondered what it was like to stand in a field for ten years
with nothing to do but graze and watch the seasons pass. I scratched
their noses briefly, murmured words of condolence, then bent
to push up the middle strand of fence wire and
climbed into the pasture.