

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.