

Wallowing / Robert Morgan

When Old Nell rolled in the bins
she'd hollowed out of the pasture flats she
whinnied with the pleasure
as one ripened area of skin after
another whetted the firm ground,
shuddered and twisted to reach
difficult locations, simultaneous
itches on withers and rump.
She seemed more like a snake or worm there
on her back, often pulsing in coital
shiver like an amoeba.
I knew she scrubbed off fly eggs,
dung, dried blood from bites,
in the rasp of sand,
the emery submersion salving
harness galls and currying off sweat
with lumps and rocks, massaging
the soreness of age.
Finding still neglected precincts
she'd press them with a snort to
dry grass at the lip of the wallow,
stoking and frisking hair roots,
and getting down into the trough
generate with friction a field of brushed
nerves. She indulged a third of her
hide at once to the bump and tickle,
running with the pasture on her back.
Thrashing late summer dust
in the whirlpool. Then
stood and shook herself of the dry
cloud and smoked pure and free
as if new-born in the depression,
and stepped onto the wide pasture.