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# Hotblood

John S. Harris

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## Hotblood

What a horse Medio could have been—  
 Sixteen hands, eleven fifty  
 And grandson of Man-o-War  
 On his father's side  
 Red sorrel with two white feet  
 And a star,  
 A coat as fine as mouse fur  
 That rippled over thoroughbred lean.

Foaled in Montana as a remount,  
 Rough broke at three  
 Then turned out to grass  
 When the cavalry quit buying.

He was five when he came to me—  
 Gaunt from the railroad car  
 And hotblood wild—more untameable  
 Than any desert-caught mustang.

I was sixteen  
 And thought I knew my horses  
 From a Welsh pony  
 And a Morgan-Hambletonian cross.  
 I knew about gentling them down  
 With grain and curry comb,  
 And snubbing to a tame horse  
 And riding on plowed ground  
 And holding their heads up  
 So they couldn't buck.

But it wasn't enough.

I lost count of the times  
 He pulled his head loose  
 And threw me off.

And he ran away with me—  
Two miles on a paved road,  
Running like the leader in a race—  
Paying no attention  
To my seesawing the reins—  
Until he was stopped by a brick wall.

Once we put him in a chute  
To check his feet  
And he kicked at one of us  
And ripped his velvet hide  
On a projecting nail,  
And then frantic, he kicked again  
And again and again—  
Until the leg was ruined  
And he had to be destroyed.

I've known men like that.

—John S. Harris