

Horse by Roisin Kelly

He teases my palm with his soft lips
at first—but finding no apple there
bites down hard.
I have no apples to give, those

red globes tumbled from me long ago.
Now there is just my mobile
buzzing in my breast pocket
when I go riding

after a fight
untaken calls vibrating against the apple
of my heart. In needled rain
this horse offers a movement

of flesh and muscle between my thighs
that I do not find
in bed that night:
only a sleeper with his back to me

and the moon cooling the bedroom.
I dream of riding
through a hot wind of rain and sweat
urging the horse to a gallop

so that all horizons will blur
and become meaningless.
But on the brink of speed I wake
my skin burning with the smell of damp

horse flesh, and in the dream-world
my horse races on
without me, his fading hoofbeats
like distant drums heard before battle.

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