Fall 1979

Trying One Outside

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TRYING ONE OUTSIDE

With one quick nod
he locks his chin
and teeth, snarls
"let's git,"
sets his hooks
hard in her neck
and holds, toes out,
as the bronc bails from chute six,
a marlin trying to spit the barbs
in midair, twisting, throwing half a ton
six different directions at once, six
thousand pounds of fast jerk and snatch
on hundred pound test arm
tapered at the wrist – this frail line
frapping horse to man. His rowels
sing on every jump, wire
line stripping from deep-sea
reels, and hooves slap air,
divots flinging like tips of waves
shattered against the breakwater.
Just try to straddle the dorsal
fin of an angry fish
and stay with it out to sea
for eight long years, till the bell
bouys or fognhorns call you
back to solid ground.