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## Clothes Horse

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## *Clothes Horse*

Heifer brown in her buckskin dress  
Horse in corral  
with sun across its mane brown

Falling leaf brown when she walks

Closest bush to the road brown  
fry bread smell in the grease brown

Horses graze as needles stitching the grass  
She covers herself with porcupine quills,  
raccoon stripes, feathers of the mottled hens  
& skunk grass

Not awake yet brown in the head  
of her buckskin dress  
lonesome red of the plucked rooster comb

The metallic strip of silo  
reminds her of a beading needle

Not muzzled with buttons  
her bosom waddles under the duststorm  
of her buckskin dress  
somewhere  
the prickly pear of her nipples flesh

She is the only squaw with a closet in her teepee

The first morning light  
through the flat trees brown

Silver scissored as the river  
she cuts through fields & hunting grounds  
her brown buckskin dress fringed with elk teeth

She is on her way to the yard goods store  
mouth stained red as winterberry

Gourd rattle brown, buckbrush brown,  
wild turkey, wood duck brown,  
running dog into the hills brown

Her brave hunts all season for pelts & hides  
while she sits warm as campfire  
like a yellow veined leaf

Leggins, sashes, belts, turtle shells, blankets,  
shawls, combs, bags, hornet nest hats—

It takes a two-horse travois to get her  
to winter camp.