

King and Kernel

Old Belgian draft horses
Dad bought from our neighbor
about twenty years ago
for a load of corn
were with us.

Brother and sister - Mom thought-
who pulled the plow, corn planter,
hay wagon and carried me, bareback,
my legs gripping her ribs,
wherever I wanted to go.

After a workday in the field,
their leather harnesses removed,
they rolled on their backs in the pasture,
then returned for their brushing
and a bucket of oats.

Until
Dad came back
from the barn for breakfast
with sorrow seeping:
“It’s Kernel.”