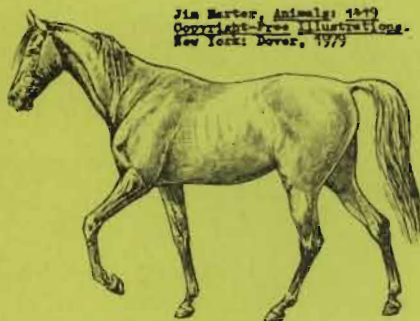


Bonney A Mare For All Seasons



Jim Barter. Animals: 1919
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New York: Dover, 1979

To ride in Winter means
The winds of heaven
Course through our common heart;
Hooves strike the frozen ground,
Yet, lovely as a snowflake,
She treads above the cold of earth;
—And comfort there is,
Comfort in the brown sides, warm.

Spring:—her daintiness
Matches the unfolding freshness
Of new leaves;
Running from the pasture at my call,
She brings joy,—
Joy like the onrush of green,
Spreading now over the gray earth
With gladness.

Astride, Summer sunlight
Patterns the leaf surfaces
Into forms not seen on foot;
The graceful shapes
Like the rhythm of her flowing body,
Stirred by a soft breeze;
Each unduplicated,
Suffused by summer's rich fulfillment.

Yet would I name her
For the Autumn:
October's red-brown promise;
Her coat plain-leaf russet,
With no flash of white;
Like oak, then, strong, and the burnish
Of the acorn; hickory, chestnut:
Rich splendor of earth's harvest.

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