

Little Brown Horse

Deby Walker

Little brown horse,

I came to visit but you were nowhere to be seen.

A cold wet day, the rain turned the earth into thick brown paste, sucking and pulling at each step.

It was Christmas eve.

The lights twinkled in trees in people's homes. Warmth, happiness, messages of peace and goodwill,

There were no lights twinkling for little brown horse, and no trees to shelter her from the relentless rain, or shack to keep her dry.

Little brown horse, just six months in this harsh world, pulling up hooves out of the grasping mud, coat soaked and running rivulets through her precious brown hair.

That day the people were busy, rushing and bustling. Buying more gifts and more, and more
but nothing for little brown horse.

Across the road lay higher ground, wet but still green and stretching up to freedom and sheltering trees. Little brown horse must have longed to get there, next to her mother.

But the rain poured down through another cold night and the full moon lit the swelling river that flooded the ground once more.

Not so far away children looked up awaiting a sleigh and reindeer to fly through the sky, and parents remembered to leave a carrot under the tree.

But no one thought to take one for little brown horse.

As they awoke early next morning, running downstairs to open their gifts, little brown horse dragged her sodden body with mud caked legs, up to a ridge on the land.

Cold wet and hungry, the remorseless weather stealing her last wisp of energy, her hooves slipping and sliding.....

Shrieks of glee as paper ripped and presents rolled.

Choirs singing to well dressed people.

And little brown horse ?

I came to see you again today, my beautiful little brown horse.

You were hard to find in that thick brown mud, but I found you.

Your neck skinny and strained and your teeth locked shut.

Your whole body now almost enveloped with mud.

Legs sprawled, hooves unkempt,

and blood still dripping