

There Are No More Horses Here

All the tools are still greased against rust.
Dust kicked up from the shed floor
or swept through from the unmetalled drive
sticks to lines of hammers, chisels,
a posthole digger, a tractor wrench, their shapes
chalked behind them like dead men on sidewalks.

To take them down, to grip them, means grit—
a long, dirty handshake with The Farming Life:
the acknowledgement that preservation costs,
is not pretty or comfortable. Usefulness
has a scent, and obsolescence is the threat

hanging back there with the ill-packed hame,
the bitless bridle limp in idleness,
its leather so perished, to fold a rein
would crumble it like thick wet cardboard.

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