

Hobble Creek Almanac

Justin Evans

Growing up every child learned the story, how horses
stole themselves away like thieves in the night
down to the cool waters to drink, shrug off
the day's work, which had gathered, swollen
their now hobbled ankles; how settlers woke,
learned their animals had found escape,
iron shackles left in the anemic stream,
naming by baptism the small creek and town.

We all learned what's in a name, how identity
comes along for the ride, can saddle a family
for generations; how a name can elicit a stare,
put a child at the same desk an older sister occupied,
or a cousin, or a parent before that; how the past
can never be erased by what takes place day to day.