



LAND'S SAKE

WESTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Too Many Feet- Short Story by Carol Burnes

We used to stage baseball games between Earthwatch where Bear worked and LandSake and Bear never knew which team to play on - with a cook out here afterwards.

Once one of the guys who worked there wanted to farm with work horses. He had two and they lived here and worked the fields there. I think his name was Steve Miller. Bear was a bit wary of large horses though he had learned to put up with my pesky Morgan mare who always gave him a hard time rolling in his gardens, breaking his fences etc etc. I loved having workhorses here again.

I remember when this place was farmed with horses until about 1954 when my grandfather decided to modernize and bought a yellow jeep we called Buttercup and an International Harvester tractor which I still own and cherish, and have named Earl. I remember the work horses back then, huge and affable, and feeding them apples as they stood in their straight stalls where my bathroom and a coat closet are now, the smell of the sweaty harnesses hanging on the wall behind them was familiar. Each evening after feeding, my great treat was to ride one or the other bareback as they were led down to the pasture where they spent the night - I loved the long rocking stride while I sat on top of the world! I even have a picture someplace of them plowing the drive with a huge wooden V shaped plow which I just remember from when I was very small.

Sometimes when the LandSake pair got bored
they broke fence and wandered down the drive
on walkabout by themselves
past my mother's and her not so lush lawns,
heading across the street to the deep rich green
of Mr Mercer's lawns where they left great hoofy
implants in his manicured expanses of green.
This was not well received and became less and less tolerated.

One night they were restless and Bear
who was not entirely at ease with them
tried to discourage them.
He stood in front of them waving his arms to turn them around
as they walked casually and steadily towards him
then right through the electric fence.
He retreated immediately, then jumped out of their way
said they were a hell of lot bigger than him
and had way too many feet.
They sauntered down the drive past my mother's
(who would not have cared had they planted
hoofy prints all over her lawn)
heading to the neighbor's.
I grabbed buckets of grain and Bear
and we set out after them;
at the rattle of grain they changed course and
followed us back home and into the Barn for the night.
Walking between these two awesome creatures
shoulder to shoulder almost touching
keeping the grain rattling
I secretly began to agree with Bear, there were
a lot of very big feet just inches away from mine.

A memory, a story...
a little slice of Land's Sake history
and probably no one remembers the landsake horses